

LITTELL'S LIVING AGE.

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From The New York Evening Post.

"OLD LAURIGER."

THE most charming of college songs, both for tune and words, is the familiar "Lauriger Horatius." Mr. James A. Morgan, of New York, writes to the *College Courant* of Yale an interesting letter about it, of which the following is the substance:

"Can any of your correspondents tell me who was the author of that most widely known and admired of our college songs, 'Lauriger Horatius'? Also, of the origin of the tune, which our Southern brethren appropriated during the war, to their 'My Maryland'?"

"Whoever wrote it, had drunk in the true rollick of the Mantuan; for Flaccus himself never wrote sixteen lines that breathed more unmistakably his own abandon, than this little bumper of *bonhomie*, as sparkling and inspiring as a glass of Sully's best. . . . I have been told that in the terrible Wilderness an officer heard a little group of grimmed and blackened men, in a rifle-pit, singing 'Lauriger Horatius.' Near them were lying two of their wounded comrades, waiting for the surgeons who were long coming, in those sad days when brave men lay bleeding in every thicket. And these two wounded men — one of them, as it proved, past all human surgery — were stoutly echoing the chorus they had so often shouted in merry rout and college frolic, when, poor fellows! they hardly dreamed their time, 'swifter than the tempest's breath,' was upon them. And I can well fancy that, like as in that group under the Redan,

"Something upon the soldier's cheek
Washed off the stains of powder,"

as the brave hearts dwelt on the long ago.

"The following translation was written, I believe, by an army officer, in his camp, during the late rebellion:

"LAURIGER HORATIUS.

I.

"Poet of the Laurel wreath,
Horace, true thy saying:
Fleeter than the tempest's breath;
Is Time, for nought delaying.
"Bring the cup that crowneth bliss,
Goblets, rosy laden;
Ah! the frown, the smile, the kiss
Of a blushing maiden.

II.

"Sweetly blooms the maid, the grape
Gracefully uptwineth;

But the poet, thirsty, sad,
Mournfully declineth.
"Bring the cup, &c.

III.

"Glory is a hollow toy,
Fame doth yield but sorrow;
Wine and love alone give joy,
Heedless of to-morrow.
"Bring the cup, &c."

"Another better known version of the chorus is:

"Give me cups that Bacchus crowns,
Cups on mirth attending;
Give me blushing maidens' frowns,
Frowns in kisses ending."

Mr. Morgan gives the following as a perfect copy of the song, of which the common versions show many various readings:

"LAURIGER HORATIUS.

I.

"Lauriger Horatius
Quam dixisti verum,
Fugit Euro citius
Tempus edax rerum.
"Ubi sunt, O pocula
Dulciora melle
Rixae, pax et oscula
Rubentis puellae.

II.

"Crescit uva molliter
Et puella crescit;
Sed poeta turpiter
Sitiens, canescit.
"Ubi sunt, &c.

III.

"Quid iuvat aeternitas
Nominis? amare
Nisi terrae filias
Licet, et potare.
"Ubi sunt, &c."

The simple and beautiful air of Lauriger is just the thing for a campaign song. Will not some one of our Republican poets find lyric inspiration enough in the great political contest of 1868, for the safety of the government, and for peace, to give us words for it, which shall wed its sweet strains with the people's patriotic hopes and aspirations?

From The North British Review.

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE.

THE institutions and social life of America would appear in some respects unfavourable to the production of any form of literary activity in which the imagination is principally concerned. There is a hardness and matter-of-fact quality alike about the types of character and the historical environments which the Western Continent presents to the writer's study and choice, while he himself is open to the same influences that tend to produce these general features of national life. There would seem, therefore, to be at once less favourable conditions for the generation of the idealistic faculty, on the one hand, and less material for its exercise, on the other. Notwithstanding this twofold operation of the practical and materialistic complexion of the life of that great nation, its literature is not without examples of conspicuous idealism. A country that can boast of three such contemporary authors as Emerson in Philosophy, Longfellow in Poetry, and Hawthorne in Pure Fiction, cannot be considered a barren or unhopeful soil for the cultivation of the richer fruits of the imagination.

As a literary artist, and in respect of that characteristic so difficult to analyse or define, but to which common consent has assigned the name Genius, it is questionable whether, among the distinguished and remarkable men whom America has produced, there is any one of higher rank than Nathaniel Hawthorne — if, indeed, his equal. He has no glittering brilliance to arrest vulgar notice, no high-pressure enthusiasm or sweeping passion hurrying away with whirlwind-power great and small that come within its range, nor that rude muscular force that compels attention and often commands assent. He is calm, dreamy, subtle, with an imagination most penetrating, a refined — almost a fastidious taste; and in his hands the pen becomes a very magician's wand, "creating," as he himself says, "the semblance of a world out of airy matter, with the impalpable beauty of a soap-bubble."

He is very far from being one of Carlyle's heroes: he is eminently the man of contemplation — not of action. His part in the drama of life — if it can be properly

called a part in the drama at all — is not on the busy stage, mingling in the throng by whom the movement is carried on and the plot worked out; but aside, as a spectator, sympathising with, yet critical of all, and recognising the hidden springs of the action and the influences, reaching from beyond the present and the visible, that sway the actors, with a far keener and more comprehensive sense than any of themselves. It could not be better expressed than in the words of Miles Coverdale, in reference to his own share of the transactions at Blithedale: — "It resembles that of the chorus in a classic play, which seems to be set aloof from the possibility of personal concernment, and bestows the whole measure of its hope or fear, its exultation or sorrow, on the fortunes of others, between whom and itself this sympathy is the only bond." He is meditative, sympathetic, interpretative; too poised to be decisive; with an ear too justly open to the multitudinous voices within him, to become the clear and pronounced organ and advocate of any one. Hence at once a certain suggestiveness and reticence, a tendency to raise questions rather than to settle them, and a delicacy, almost diffidence of treatment, which by some is felt to be most insinuating, by others timid or tantalizing. There are dark and curious chambers within his consciousness, which perhaps a want of firmness and courage, perhaps a wise humility, restrains him from too rashly investigating, but the shadowy forms of which he often finds a pleasing subdued awe in watching and pointing out from a distance. He sees a mystery in every living thing, — not merely the mystery which profounder science discovers underlying every operation of Nature, and of which that operation is but the phenomenal result and expression, but a latent mystery which manifests itself often with seeming caprice, yet ever normally, finding its cause and sanction less in physical than in moral and spiritual forces and laws operating through the veil of sensible things that overlie them. Endowed with a deep appreciation of the wonderful complexity of life, he sees minutely interlacing tissues lost to grosser sense, and which sometimes, under unusual lights, present shifting and apparently unaccountable hues.

It is thus not difficult to understand that, with all his power, he is hardly what can be termed a popular author. In the present day, indeed, the popular taste has become so vitiated by unhealthy stimulus and coarse sensational excitement, that anything so refined as his flavour must be felt by all who indulge in such debauchery (we can use no milder term) to be cold, lifeless, vapid. He has nothing rough enough in the grain to affect senses so exhausted and debased, and if he had, he is too true an Epicurean to use it. He is dainty in his tastes, and by the dainty reader alone will he be relished. Not only, therefore, in these days of demoralizing fiction and over-wrought incident, will he be generally found to be too reflective and deficient in excitement to be attractive; at any time his fame is not likely to be that of the well-thumbed and dog-eared page. But even now he is, and one day we believe will be still more, generally regarded by competent readers as one of the most refined, tender, powerful, and highly imaginative writers in the English language.

His employment of that language in perfect adaptation to his purpose, is one of the most prominent charms of this author. We have said, he is dainty in his tastes. In nothing is he more dainty than in his use of words. He is a purist in style. It may, perhaps, be possible that scrutinizing eyes may detect here and there an expression that serves to mark his nationality. But his vocabulary is singularly choice and appropriate, and his style is a model of elegance. It is free from exaggeration or straining, and if it is generally unimpassioned, it is still more devoid of stiffness and dry ungeniality. It flows in a placid, gentle rill, always sweet and pellucid; sometimes in its clearness and purity, in its unobtrusive operation and quiet movement, it may rather be said to distil over upon its subject, and there to crystallize with curious refracting power, which reveals the image undimmed, but deflected from the direct line of vision. Optics supply a parallel to another of its qualities. It often acts like a reversed telescope, throwing objects back into the distance, and imparting to them a fineness and delicacy and fairy-like aspect, so true and life-like that in no particular

can they be found to differ from the realities seen when the glass is withdrawn, and yet with a subtle ethereal character and air of unreality. It is a style admirably adapted to his genius and proclivities, and seems with snake-like ease and grace to curve itself round the quaintest forms, and to insinuate itself into the most tortuous convolutions of thought and sentiment. So far as mere language is concerned, there are few writers that can produce effects of awe and terror and weird-like mystery with so simple means. He builds his magic edifice with small and plain materials, but disposed with such cunning art, that others more imposing and gorgeous would be felt to be vulgar and ostentatious in comparison.

There are, however, many minds deeply thoughtful and full of generous sympathy, who find in his works neither the charm nor the high tone we would ascribe to them. His immense power — and that always exercised in the most temperate and unstrained manner — can hardly, we think, be denied; but he manifests a fondness for dealing with sides of our nature where assuredly the strength and cheerfulness of humanity do not lie, which by some is felt to be morbid. And we would admit at once that he often chooses subjects that are dangerous themes, and unfolds with curious scrutiny the working of emotions, the treatment of which in almost any other hands than his would degenerate into sickly sentimentalism or repulsive ugliness. In truth, he not only shows a certain preference for handling such subjects, he sometimes almost seems to play with them. He turns them over and over as if loth to dismiss them or to leave a single point unexamined; he never wearies trying on them the effect of various positions and points of view. But we maintain that his apparent toying with such topics is only apparent. It is the mode in which minds like his question and investigate, and the more cautious and thorough the research the more protracted the seeming dalliance. It is, in fact, after a certain fashion, an application to Ethics of the Baconian experimental method of inquiry. He does not reason out his questions: he simply verifies them; and the experimental survey must be thorough and exhaustive to secure the inclusion of all possible contingencies.

Moral and psychological problems which by the abstract thinker would be analysed and acutely discussed, are by him—we shall not say solved, for positive solution is what he rarely ventures to commit himself to—but, in anatomical phrase, *demonstrated*, by exhibiting the bearings, the workings, and consequences of the data, in concrete and living forms in many and various aspects. Given combinations of moral and spiritual forces are not judged of speculatively. He reduces them to experiment and illustration. He embodies them in the creatures of his imagination, in their character and circumstances, and with the unerring sympathy and instinct of genius he inspires them with life and evolves the results, leaving these to speak for themselves.

That in the prosecution of such experimental Ethics through the instrumentality of the imagination, he evinces somewhat the spirit and tendency of a casuist, must perhaps be granted, in the sense that he generally selects cases which are out of the ordinary run of daily life, which are delicate, fine, and intricate in the complexity and often in the contradictoriness of their elements, and which cannot be decided—while he at least is too judicial, too conscientious to decide—in the rough-and-ready style, and by the sound, but not always nicely discriminating rules that prevail with salutary result in practical and busy life. The questions he raises are for the most part too complicated and difficult to be dealt with by so coarse though effective an instrument as the so-called strong common sense of the upright man of the world. Such a man would misjudge them, or if his conclusions were right, they would be so on false premisses, and irrespective of considerations that ought to obtain recognition. Hawthorne rests satisfied with no such haphazard and superficial treatment. He manipulates his combinations with the utmost care and precision, to make sure the good there is may not be lost sight of, or to impress on us with haunting iteration the baneful effects on it of that with which it is associated.

An evidence of the general healthiness of his nature may be found in the scenes of sweet innocence and natural simplicity that abound in his works. The freshness of childhood and pictures of genial life and

natural beauty have a charm for him, not less than the most intricate and complex tissue of strange and conflicting elements. Every reader must remember "The Old Manse," with its rich orchard, bounded by the sluggish waters of the Concord; its cobwebby library; the fishing excursion with Ellery Channing; the peaceful rest of its "near retirement and accessible seclusion;" its gentle joys "in those genial days of autumn, when Mother Nature, having perfected her harvests and accomplished every needful thing that was given her to do, overflows with a blessed superfluity of love, and has leisure to caress her children." How fresh and touching in its extreme simplicity, mixed with one or two touches of quiet humour, and relieved here and there at the close of a paragraph by a sudden turn of pleasantly quaint moralizing is "Little Annie's Ramble." What a genuine eye for, and unaffected love of, what is purest, fairest in human nature, it reveals! How charming a half-dozen pages! and all about the commonest objects,—some would say, the veriest trifles of daily life. Little Pearl in *The Scarlet Letter* in one of her more natural moods, playing by the sea-shore, while her mother converses with her outraged husband, is hardly less beautiful, if, in its connexion and collateral bearings, not quite so simple a picture of childhood:—

"At first, as already told, she had flirted fancifully with her own image in a pool of water, beckoning the phantom forth, and—as it declined to venture—seeking a passage for herself into its sphere of impalpable earth and unattainable sky. Soon finding, however, that either she or the image was unreal, she turned elsewhere for better pastime. She made little boats out of birch-bark, and freighted them with snail-shells, and sent out more ventures on the mighty deep than any merchant in New England; but the larger part of them foundered near the shore. She seized a live horse-shoe by the tail, and made prize of several five-fingers, and laid out a jelly-fish to melt in the warm sun. Then she took up the white foam, that streaked the line of the advancing tide, and threw it upon the breeze, scampering after it, with winged footsteps, to catch the great snow-flakes ere they fell. Perceiving a flock of beach-birds, that fed and fluttered along the shore, the naughty child picked up her apron full of pebbles, and, creep-

ing from rock to rock after these small sea-fowl, displayed remarkable dexterity in pelting them. One little grey bird, with a white breast, Pearl was almost sure had been hit by a pebble, and fluttered away with a broken wing. But then the elf-child sighed, and gave up her sport, because it grieved her to have done harm to a little being that was as wild as the sea-breeze, or as wild as Pearl herself.

"Her final employment was to gather seaweeds of various kinds, and make herself a scarf or mantle, and a head-dress, and thus assume the aspect of a little mermaid. She inherited her mother's gift for devising drapery and costume. As the last touch to her mermaid's garb, Pearl took some eel-grass, and imitated, as best she could, on her own bosom, the decoration with which she was so familiar on her mother's, a letter—the letter A—but freshly green instead of scarlet! The child bent her chin upon her breast, and contemplated this device with strange interest, even as if the one only thing for which she had been sent into the world was to make out its hidden import."

The heart that so sings in harmony with childhood's sweetest music can hardly be suspected of choosing and enjoying the delineation of horror or evil for its own sake. Even in his tales of darker shade and lurid light, these qualities are relieved, and their real character attested, by the bright sunshine and winning beauty that form the broader features of the picture. In this lies the contrast and moral superiority of his tales, even of most thrilling awe, to those of his wild, erratic countryman, Edgar Allan Poe, whose productions derive their chief fascination from the depth of unredeemed and unnatural horror they reveal. It may be, that what is strange and unusual in humanity has for Hawthorne rather more than a due share of attractiveness, but he never chooses evil for his study from a love of it; and delicate themes he always treats with the utmost delicacy. Nothing could exceed the purity, tenderness, and, at the same time, harrowing truthfulness, with which the sin of the "Scarlet Letter" and its fruits are portrayed. We regret we can extract no passage for illustration. Quotation here is of no avail. It is a delicacy, not of any one scene, but pervading the entire story, with a sustained tone that could be achieved only by a mind in which the highest delicacy of feeling is native and inherent. Very different results would such materials have yielded in the hands of a George Sand, or of a Victor Hugo. Even in those of not a few of our popular English novelists we should have seen over all "the trail of the serpent." It may be that Hawthorne exhibits too great a predilection for what may be considered *curious* experi-

ments in the Chemistry of Ethics; but if he deals with poisons, it is to make their real nature and effects known, even when they mingle with fair and good things,—never to trifle with and disguise them.

To the general soundness as well as fineness of moral feeling and judgment displayed in his works, we must admit, at least, one grave exception. His *Life of Pierce* might perhaps be disposed of as an ephemeral production, which, if it served its more immediate purpose, was never meant to do more; as unworthy, it may be, of his reputation and powers, but never put forth with the intention or hope of its surviving its temporary aims, and therefore to count for nothing in an estimate of his literary capacity and character. Were it merely worthless, this course might be followed. It were hard could one not help his friend to the Presidency by an electioneering pamphlet, without it being subjected to the same criticism as his more earnest and professedly artistic works. Such plea may be sustained for an innocent squib or *jeu d'esprit*. But how slight soever its proportions, how occasional soever its ostensible purpose, his *Life of Pierce* seeks to achieve that purpose by a treatment, neither apparently frivolous nor uncandid, of a question of the deepest import; and it would seem difficult to escape the dilemma, that either the opinions it sets forth are seriously entertained and advocated by the author, or the success of General Pierce was more to him than truth or falsehood in regard to a question as sacred as it is momentous. When General Pierce offered himself as a candidate for the Presidency, the repeal or the maintenance of the Fugitive Slave Act was the question of the day. Pierce was a declared proslavery man; and it is with extreme pain that we find Hawthorne advocating his claims as those of a "man who dared to love that great and grand reality—his whole united native country—better than the mistiness of a philanthropic theory." Still we are reluctant to allow ourselves to think that he was, in defiance of nobler convictions, basely prostituting his pen for electioneering purposes. We are rather disposed to believe that he distrusted the wisdom and ability as well as the moderation of the extreme Abolition party,—that he doubted whether violent effort to achieve promptly great social changes might not result in worse disaster. The gradual progress, the natural growth of the body social and politic, was one of the soundest lessons our own great statesman Burke taught. It may be easy for us now, with the result so far accomplished, to read the past in a

different light. But we should not forget how little, at one stage of the great struggle, many even of the most generous and philanthropic among ourselves sympathized with or had faith in the professions or the cause of the North. The heroic is born of intensity rather than of breadth and comprehension, and a man may see things on too many sides, unless he sees them all fully and in their just relations. With limited faculties activity may be paralysed by increased knowledge and breadth of view,—not by the calls to action appearing less, but by the objections to any particular action appearing greater. Some spirits are —

“framed

Too subtly pondering for mastery,”

or, indeed, for any independent action at all. The following reads less like a wise and humble distrust of human foresight and scheming, than a renunciation of enlightened moral agency and of free human aim and effort,—less like a submission to Providence than an acquiescence in Fate:—

“One view, and probably a wise one, looks upon slavery as one of those evils which Divine Providence does not leave to be remedied by human contrivances, but which, in its own good time, by some means impossible to be anticipated, but by the simplest and easiest operation, when all its uses shall have been fulfilled, shall vanish like a dream. There is no instance in all history of the human will and intellect having perfected any great moral reform by methods which it adapted to that end; but the progress of the world at every step leaves some evil or wrong on the path behind it, which the wisest of mankind, of their own set purpose, could never have found the way to rectify.”*

While, however, we recognise a source of weakness and timidity in this scrupulous anxiety to discriminate and to balance, a shrinking from responsibility that tends to issue in a system almost of indifference, in forgetfulness of the fact that the responsibility of *laissez-faire* decision is quite as great as that of one of interference, it is well we should not confound this with deliberate pandering of clear and honest convictions to lower motives.

An inclination to a fatalistic view of the world and human affairs crops out in other parts of his writings, and perhaps it might form an interesting question how far this tendency may be due to his training in a school of mystic idealism, on the one hand, and to his experience of an attempt to realize a specious but unsound communism and social scheme for the amelioration

of the universe in general, on the other. It were assuredly unjust to assume that the opinions expressed by any of his characters,—even those that by any preference or general approval or other token seem to lie nearest the personality of the author,—represent the author's own sentiments; and full account must be taken of the fact, that in what we now quote, the speaker is represented as undergoing a process of gradual but thorough deterioration alike morally and intellectually. Still, as that speaker is also portrayed as a man of indomitable will and self-reliance, and therefore presents no special appropriateness—at least no clear call or apology—for such views as he is made to utter, the expression of opinion, especially taken in connexion with the deliverance above given by the author in *propria persona*, is not without significance—

“Peace, Hester, peace!” replied the old man, with gloomy sternness,—“it is not granted me to pardon. I have no such power as thou tellest me of. My old faith, long forgotten, comes back to me, and explains all that we do, and all we suffer. By thy first step awry, thou didst plant the germ of evil; but since that moment it has all been a dark necessity. Ye that have wronged me are not sinful, save in a kind of typical illusion; neither am I fiend-like, who have snatched a fiend's office from his hands. It is our fate. Let the black flower blossom as it may! Now go thy ways, and deal as thou wilt with yonder man.”†

So again in that terrible interview by the brook-side in the forest, when Hester Prynne, in obedience to the requirement of her child, again fastens on her breast the stigma of her sin and shame, with the removal of which she had felt as if the burden of her life and its anguish had departed from her spirit, we read:—

“Hopefully, but a moment ago, as Hester had spoken of drowning it in the deep sea, there was a sense of inevitable doom upon her, as she thus received back the deadly symbol from the hand of fate. She had flung it into infinite space! She had drawn an hour's free breath! and here again was the scarlet misery glittering on the old spot! So it ever is, whether thus typified or no, that an evil deed invests itself with the character of doom.”†

A reflection made by the author in his own name at the end of *The Scarlet Letter*, in taking leave of two of the principal characters, affords less doubtful evidence of the transcendental influence of Emerson. As usual, his strongly undogmatic tendency restrains him from any positive assertion;

* *Life of Franklin Pierce*, pp. 113, 114.

* *The Scarlet Letter*, p. 161.

† *Ibid.* p. 198.

but the negation of any fundamental and ineradicable distinction between right and wrong, good and evil, is more than nibbled at:—

"Nothing was more remarkable than the change which took place, almost immediately after Mr. Dimmesdale's death, in the appearance and demeanour of the old man known as Roger Chillingworth. All his strength and energy—all his vital and intellectual force—seemed at once to desert him; inasmuch that he positively withered up, shrivelled away, and almost vanished from mortal sight, like an uprooted weed that lies wilting in the sun. This unhappy man had made the very principle of his life to consist in the pursuit and systematic exercise of revenge; and when by its completest triumph and consummation, that evil principle was left with no further material to support it, when, in short, there was no more Devil's work on earth for him to do, it only remained for the unhumanized mortal to betake himself whither his Master would find him tasks enough, and pay him his wages duly. But to all these shadowy beings, so long our near acquaintances,—as well Roger Chillingworth as his companions,—we would fain be merciful. It is a curious subject of observation and inquiry, whether hatred and love be not the same thing at bottom. Each in its utmost development supposes a high degree of intimacy and heart-knowledge; each renders one individual dependent for the food of his affections and spiritual life upon another; each leaves the passionate lover, or the no less passionate hater, forlorn and desolate by the withdrawal of his subject. Philosophically considered, therefore, the two passions seem essentially the same, except that one happens to be seen in a celestial radiance, and the other in a dusky and lurid glow. In the spiritual world, the old physician and the minister—mutual victims as they have been—may unawares have found their earthly stock of hatred and antipathy transmuted into golden love." *

The view we have taken of his writings, as aiming before all else to be an embodiment of the operation and results of strange, involved, and conflicting combinations of moral and spiritual data, is quite in keeping with the very sparing use he makes of eventful incident. Perhaps no novelist so little depends on plot, or on the interest of outward circumstance. If the crucial merit of such a form of literary composition be, as some are disposed to hold, the continuous movement of a well-told story, few claims can be made in his favour. There is no romantic adventure; no gathering complications disentangled by sudden un-dreamt-of disclosures; no development of events in strict causal sequence, leading ultimately to startling unsuspected results, not even stirring movement of life. No

more striking instance could be found of how little he depends on the interest of suspense, of doubt to be solved, of difficulty to be overcome, than is presented in the chapter of *Transformation* entitled "The Spectre of the Catacomb." The separation of one from the other members of a party visiting the Catacombs of Rome would seem to afford an occasion for a most natural, almost unavoidable scene of high-pitched interest and excitement. The reality of the danger; its magnitude and horror; the confusion of the searchers, themselves ignorant of the labyrinth, and each in imminent risk of being lost in the gloom and enravement of the intersecting narrow passages; their proneness to rush hither and thither without plan; their eagerness and anxiety only multiplying the difficulties and the hazard; their hasty movements, now extinguishing their tapers, now carrying them past marks that are important for retracing their own steps; their flashing hopes and crushing disappointments;—all the details of such an event are what many writers of fiction would make a considerable digression to introduce—what hardly one would spurn. Yet Hawthorne, when Miriam is separated from her companions in the dismal corridors of St. Calixtus, after mentioning that the guide assured them that there was no possibility of rendering assistance unless by shouting at the top of their voices, quietly disposes of the crisis in a sentence:—"Accordingly they all began to shriek, halloo, and bellow, with the utmost force of their lungs. And, not to prolong the reader's suspense (for we do not particularly seek to interest him in this scene, telling it only on account of the trouble and strange entanglement which followed), they soon heard a responsive call in a female voice." He dwells chiefly on the development of the results on the inner life of such events as are narrated—or implied; for often the event is already passed, and only inferred, or its circumstantial details, and not unfrequently its actual nature, left vague and undefined. Sometimes even—so little is made of mere outward actualities—a suggestion is offered of several possible cases, and the reader invited to make his choice. The actual facts of outward life, considered merely as facts, are held quite subordinate to the intellectual and moral influences with which they are charged; and these he sets forth with a patient minuteness and lingering scrutiny as if he suspected they might yet present some new aspect, or were afraid to close the record uncompleted.

It must not, however, be understood that we would imply that he is to be described

* *The Scarlet Letter*, pp. 248, 249.

as an ideal portrait-painter. He does not, like Thackeray, sketch so many representative characters, illustrative at once of the specialties of the age and of the general human types to which they belong, and connect them by a narrative so slight, a train of events so uneventful, that the story seems little else than a thread to string such picture-beads on. He neither gives a detailed and many-sided portraiture, setting forth, as fully as that may be done, the complete individuality; nor, as is more the special power and practice of the great satirist we have named, a representation of one or two broad and distinctive traits, that form, as it were, the key-note to the character, — a dominating phase that gives tone and colour to all the rest, but still a partial and one-sided view, which, as it is left to stand for the whole, is in truth but a caricature. His forte rather is to delineate the most opposing and contradictory sides of a man, in all their contrasting struggling action and reaction. He displays, with the skill, and almost with the coolness, of an anatomist, the most intricate and conflicting passions and tendencies, as these are called forth by some critical event and its consequences. The characters presented to us by most of the novelists who aim chiefly at portraiture are for the most part stereotyped. They are shown in numerous combinations and surroundings, both to impress the leading qualities on the reader's attention, and to exhibit these qualities forcibly and fully in varied manifestation. But they are always the same; the quality may be displayed under altered circumstances, and again with more ramified operation, but is in itself to the end unmodified, and the closing manifestation, so far as it forms an element of the portrait, might as well have been the first. There is no progress, no growth. The task Hawthorne selects for himself is rather the development of the effects on character of some great absorbing interest. Not only does he subordinate the external conditions to the inner movements of life, as we have already pointed out; he represents the play of the mental mechanism less in the typical forms of definite classes, epochs, and localities, than in peculiar and strongly individualized cases unfolding under the influence of special, and often critical circumstances.

An effect of those characteristics of his productions to which we have been referring, is the withdrawal of the whole scene from the atmosphere of actual life. Thus one of the most pervading and conspicuous qualities of his works is their highly ideal character. They are rightly named "Ro-

mances." His personages do not generally come before us with that force and air of actuality that form the charm of our more realistic writers of fiction. They and their doings are shadowy, remote, and beyond the sphere of habitual experience. Yet all is felt to be profoundly true — not only what might be, but what in its essential nature *is*, within the heart and conscience. The embodying forms may be intangible shades, phantasmagoria, but the inner life they express finds within us the unhesitating responsive recognition of kindred. They are veritable human souls, though dwelling in a far-off world of cloud-land and moonshine.

With all this strongly ideal character consists a power, not unfrequently exercised, of most faithful and minute realistic painting. For example, the delightful picture of the old "Custom House" at Salem, which introduces *The Scarlet Letter*. How vividly reproduced are the old inspector and collector! One cannot read it without being affected by the sleepy, gossiping, superannuated character of the whole place. The very atmosphere seems somniferous. Or, again, in the chapter of *Transformation* entitled "Scenes by the Way," his exquisite description of rural scenes and manners in Tuscany, and of the villages and small ancient walled towns of northern Italy. Still, even his most telling and minutely detailed pictures of real life, with the truthfulness of a photograph, and the life-likeness of a portrait, are seen, as it were, through an ideal atmosphere. He sees everything through the halo of a poetic medium. All is real, but it is an old-world realness, quaint and mellow with age. The present is too hard, rigid, and unplastic for him. True American as he is, he finds himself straitened and out of his element amid the newness, the clearness of outline, the resistance to the modifying and moulding power of the imagination, of everything in the New World. There is no hoary tradition, no twilight history, no fabled antiquity, nothing picturesque or romantic. He has no play for his peculiar power. We trace this in his choice of subjects, as well as in his mode of dealing with them. He has a predilection for the farthest back times of New England life, the days of the Puritans, of trial for witchcraft; for old nooks crumbly and moss-grown, rusty parchments, a mouldering rag with traces of embroidery, of which "the stitch gives evidence of a now forgotten art, not to be recovered even by the process of picking out the threads;" for relics of a bygone age, antiquated habits, old-fashioned styles of character and

modes of thought and feeling. He oftener than once openly complains of the stern inflexibility of modern realities and American civilisation : —

"In the old countries with which fiction has long been conversant, a certain conventional privilege seems to be awarded to the romancer ; his work is not put exactly side by side with nature ; and he is allowed a license with regard to every-day probability, in view of the improved effects which he is bound to produce thereby. Among ourselves, on the contrary, there is as yet no Fairy Land so like the real world that, in a suitable remoteness, one cannot well tell the difference, but with an atmosphere of strange enchantment, beheld through which, the inhabitants have a propriety of their own. This atmosphere is what the American romancer wants. In its absence, the beings of imagination are compelled to show themselves in the same category as actually living mortals, — a necessity that renders the paint and pasteboard of their composition but too painfully discernible."

In reference to the locality in which the scene is laid, he says in the preface to *Transformation* : —

"Italy, as the site of his romance, was chiefly valuable to the author as affording him a sort of poetic or fairy precinct, where actualities would not be so terribly insisted upon as they are, and must needs be, in America. No author, without a trial, can conceive of the difficulty of writing a romance about a country where there is no shadow, no antiquity, no mystery, no picturesque and gloomy wrong, nor anything but commonplace prosperity, in broad and simple daylight, as is happily the case with my dear native land. It will be very long, I trust, before romance-writers may find congenial and easily-handled themes either in the annals of our stalwart republic, or in any characteristic and probable events of our individual lives. Romance and poetry, ivy, lichens, and wall-flow-ers, need ruin to make them grow."

The absence of hard outline and broad light is especially demanded by another well-marked tendency of our author's mind, more or less displayed in almost all his works. His pages are replete with mystery, hintings of an eerie presence, tokens of a power preternatural yet strangely in affinity with human life, repeated and repeated till a sense of unspeakable awe takes possession of the mind. But this mystery is never revealed ; it is a presence without a form, an inarticulate voice, an impalpable agency. We are kept in remembrance that there is more in heaven and earth than is dreamt of in our philosophy. We are brought face to face with the portals into the unseen and inscrutable. We are made aware of recesses in the human heart and

brain, where the light of consciousness falls but rarely, and then only casts strange, unknown, and ghastly shadows ; of possible properties in Nature, in wondrous accord and harmony with these dark forms within our own constitution, which so seldom flit across mortal vision, — properties that may lie latent all around us, imperceptible to our ordinary senses, yet exerting, or ready to exert, their influence on us every hour of our lives. Every object, every power presents itself to him as striking its roots deep into a subsoil of mystery. The present and visible ever spring from the past and unseen. Too sharp demarcations would obstruct the transition from the sphere of immediate obtrusive action, into that of agencies that have long passed from view, or have never been clearly brought within the range of mortal ken.

The introduction of these occult and preternatural powers produces no jar ; they are not felt to be inconsistent with the rest of the narrative ; they gain for themselves an acceptance as not only possible, but true, and in harmony with time, place, and circumstance. They bring with them no irresistible suggestion of the false and superstitious ; nothing of what Hawthorne himself styles "the stage effect of what is called miraculous interposition." The same character of essential truthness that we contended for in his most ideal pictures obtains here. This result is partly due to their own nature, partly to the manner in which these agencies are introduced and employed. We do not feel that it is the ordinary supernatural that is presented to us. That, however skilfully managed, would hardly recommend itself to either the judgment or the taste of the present day. Not only is the improbability, not to say impossibility, too great ; it is out of harmony with our modes of thought and feeling, even could it be made apparently possible. It is no unnatural creature that obtrudes itself suddenly, inexplicably, into the circle of our lives ; no ghostly apparition revisiting the glimpses of the moon ; no uncanny dwarf or vulgar necromancer that is brought before us, but beings and influences connected with us by intimate and inseparable bonds, not coming and going, but ever there, whether recognised or not. They seem the shadowy but immortal offspring of our own actions, thoughts and feelings, — of ourselves ; or the inalienable heritage that has come down to us from the characters and lives of our progenitors. The same absence of incident that we have found characterizing the more material agents in the scene prevails with respect to

these; they do not come as a *deus ex machina* to achieve striking results, or to overcome difficulties insuperable to mere mortal agency. They are, indeed, rarely committed to definite action. We are made to feel vaguely their power; what they may have done is hinted at as possibilities, but they are never caught in the act; we are never even assured of their positive interference. A haunting presence, they exercise their influence on us morally rather than by any sensible means.

It is perhaps a phase of this power and tendency that guides him to so constant and emphatic a recognition of those secret sympathies between individuals connected by no tie patent to sense, between our nature and even inanimate objects; of the subtle powers upon our minds of time and place; of the awful and overwhelming perplexity of our inherited tendencies and relationships; of the transmission, through generations, of the effects of human action and character, now slumbering though vital, again — on occasions the most inopportune, or opportune, according as we regard the question from the personal and selfish point of view, or from that of universal and moral government — breaking out into activity, like the course of the electric fluid, apparently ever fitful, defying prediction, yet ever in strict obedience to eternal law and varying circumstance, — here peaceful and ineffective, there subduing with irresistible force whatever it meets. There is in us a “mere sensuous sympathy of dust for dust,” in our relations with the spot where our forefathers have for centuries “been born and died, and have mingled their earthly substance with the soil, until no small portion of it must necessarily be akin to our mortal frames.” The embroidered rag that life-long branded her shame on Hester Prynne’s bosom, when musingly placed on its historian’s breast, while yet he, ignorant alike of her name and life, was idly speculating on its purpose, seemed to cause “a sensation not altogether physical, yet almost so, as of burning heat, and as if the letter were not of red cloth, but red-hot iron.” “The sympathy or magnetism among human beings is more subtle and universal than we think; it exists, indeed, among different classes of organized life, and vibrates from one to another. A flower, for instance, as Phebe herself observed, always began to droop sooner in Clifford’s hand, or Hepzibah’s, than in her own; and by the same law, converting her daily life into a flower-fragrance for these two sickly spirits, the blooming girl must inevitably droop and fade much sooner than

if worn on a younger and happier breast.” “The very contiguity of his enemy, beneath whatever mask the latter might conceal himself, was enough to disturb the magnetic sphere of a being so sensitive as Arthur Dimmesdale.” “Pearl’s inevitable tendency to hover about the enigma of the scarlet letter seemed an innate quality of her being. From the earliest epoch of her conscious life, she had entered upon this as her appointed mission.” The moral relations arising from hidden actions reveal themselves in a sort of *quasi*-physical way through the subtle, untraceable, interpenetrating affinities of mind and matter. When Hester Prynne’s husband demands of her the name of the man who had so deeply wronged them both, and demands in vain, he replies, “Never know him! . . . Thou mayest cover up thy secret from the prying multitude. Thou mayest conceal it, too, from the ministers and magistrates, even as thou didst this day, when they sought to wrench the name out of thy heart, and give thee a partner on thy pedestal. But as for me, I come to the inquest with other senses than they possess. . . . There is a sympathy that will make me conscious of him. I shall see him tremble. I shall feel myself shudder, suddenly and un-awares.” “Phœbe’s physical organization, moreover, being at once delicate and healthy, gave her a perception operating with almost the effect of a spiritual medium, that somebody was near at hand.” We are taught again that not in the garden of Eden alone, but all the world over, forbidden fruit grows on a tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and that we cannot eat thereof without having our eyes opened to the dark secrets both of our own heart and that of others: —

“Walking to and fro, with those lonely footsteps, in the little world with which she was outwardly connected, it now and then appeared to Hester, — if altogether fancy, it was nevertheless too potent to be resisted, — she felt or fancied, then, that the scarlet letter had endowed her with a new sense. She shuddered to believe, yet could not help believing, that it gave her a sympathetic knowledge of the hidden sin in other hearts. She was terror-stricken by the revelations that were thus made. What were they? Could they be other than the insidious whispers of the bad angel, who would fain have persuaded the struggling woman, as yet only half his victim, that the outward guise of purity was but a lie, and that, if truth were everywhere to be shown, a scarlet letter would blaze forth on many a bosom besides Hester Prynne’s, or must she receive these intimations — so obscure, yet so distinct — as truth? In all her miserable experience, there was nothing else so awful and

loathsome as this sense. It perplexed, as well as shocked her, by the irreverent inopportune-ness of the occasions that brought it into vivid action. Sometimes the red infamy upon her breast would give a sympathetic throb, as she passed near a venerable minister or magistrate, the model of piety and justice, to whom that age of antique reverence looked up, as to a mortal man in fellowship with angels. 'What evil thing is at hand?' would Hester say to herself. Lifting her reluctant eyes, there would be nothing human within the scope of view, save the form of this earthly saint! Again, a mystic sisterhood would contumaciously assert itself, as she met the sanctified frown of some matron, who, according to the rumour of all tongues, had kept cold snow within her bosom throughout life. That unsunned snow in the matron's bosom, and the burning shame on Hester Prynne's,—what had the two in common? Or, once more, the electric thrill would give her warning,—'Behold, Hester, here is a companion!'—and, looking up, she would detect the eyes of a young maiden glancing at the scarlet letter, shyly and aside, and quickly averted, with a faint, chill crimson in her cheeks, as if her purity were somewhat sullied by that momentary glance. O Fiend, whose talisman was that fatal symbol, wouldst thou leave nothing, whether in youth or age, for this poor sinner to revere?—such loss of faith is ever one of the saddest results of sin. Be it accepted as a proof that all was not corrupt in this poor victim of her own frailty, and man's hard law, that Hester Prynne yet struggled to believe that no fellow-mortal was guilty like herself."

Several of these instances are no doubt susceptible of being resolved into figures of speech, expressing forcibly a truth that might have been hard to render in more literal terms; and some of them perhaps were intended for no more. But it is difficult to suppose they are all so meant. Many of them seem to point to something far deeper than would be left as a residuum of bare statement, if we abstract as figure all that is capable of such treatment. The conviction that there really is some such profounder meaning wished to be conveyed is greatly increased by a thorough perusal of the works together. Many of the expressions lose much of their force and significance by severance from the context; and there are many slighter indications of a similar kind which are altogether unsusceptible of extract. The cumulative effect, indeed, of such expressions in the course of consecutive reading is very great; and it is to such a reading we must appeal if we should seem to have made more of the point than our quotations justify. Sometimes the pregnant meaning we refer to is not asserted, but suggested as a probability, or in a query, or as a scintillation of fancy:—

"She wondered what sort of herbs they were which the old man was so sedulous to gather. Would not the earth, quickened to an evil purpose by the sympathy of his eye, greet him with poisonous shrubs, of species hitherto unknown, that would start up under his fingers? Or might it suffice him, that every wholesome growth should be converted into something deleterious and malignant at his touch? Did the sun, which shone so brightly everywhere else, really fall upon him? Or was there, as it rather seemed, a circle of ominous shadow moving along with his deformity, whichever way he turned himself? And whither was he now going? Would he not suddenly sink into the earth, leaving a barren and blasted spot, where, in due course of time, would be seen deadly nightshade, dogwood, henbane, and whatever else of vegetable wickedness the climate could produce, all flourishing with hideous luxuriance? Or would he spread bats' wings and flee away, looking so much the uglier the higher he rose towards heaven?"

Sometimes what is at first insinuated as a fanciful possibility is afterwards slipped in as an affirmed fact. Thus "dark flabby leaves," unknown to men of science, were found "growing on a grave which bore no tombstone nor other memorial of the dead man, save these ugly weeds that have taken upon themselves to keep him in remembrance. They grew out of his heart, and typify, it may be, some hideous secret that was buried with him, and which he had done better to confess during his lifetime." . . . "All the powers of nature call so earnestly for the confession of sin, that these black weeds have sprung up out of a buried heart to make manifest an unspoken crime."

We must not omit to notice another feature, which, though perhaps less conspicuous, yet, like small patches of vivid colour in a picture, contributes not less effectively to produce the general result. This is a peculiar vein of humour, always fanciful, often grotesque, sometimes grim and grisly. Poor Hepzibah Pyncheon's aristocratic hens "laid now and then an egg and hatched a chicken, not for any pleasure of their own, but that the world might not absolutely lose what had once been so admirable a breed of fowls." So excessive was the warmth of her brother the judge's affected and hypocritical aspect of overflowing benevolence one particular forenoon, "that (such at least was the rumour about town) an extra passage of the water-carts was found essential, in order to lay the dust occasioned by so much extra sunshine!" The Puritan ministers, grim prints of whom adorned the walls of "the old manse" study, "looked strangely like bad angels, or, at least, like men who had wrestled so continually and

so sternly with the devil that somewhat of his sooty fierceness had been imparted to their own visages." How true a Yankee touch is this! When one little fellow warns a poor Italian boy that he had better move on, for that nobody lives in the house under a window of which he is grinding his hurdy-gurdy that will be likely to care for his music, "' You fool, you, why do you tell him?' whispered another shrewd little Yankee, caring nothing for the music, but a good deal for the cheap rate at which it was had. 'Let him play as long as he likes! If there is nobody to pay him, that's his own lookout!'" The cemetery of the Cappuccini at Rome is a small portion of holy soil from Jerusalem; and, as the whole space has long ago been occupied, there obtains the curious and ghastly practice among the monks of taking the longest buried skeleton out of the oldest grave, when one of the brotherhood dies, to make room for the new corpse, and of building the disinterred bones into architectural devices, or of placing the unbroken frame-work of bone, sometimes still covered with mummied skin and hair, and dressed in cloak and cowl, in niches all around the vaults. "Thus," quaintly comments our author, "each of the good friars, in his turn, enjoys the luxury of a consecrated bed, attended with the slight drawback of being forced to get up long before daybreak, as it were, and make room for another lodger." Very often this faculty of humour expresses itself in a piquant little touch, as a kind of aside, or passing comment, or half responsive turn with which a line of reflection is quietly but emphatically closed — like a single bright floweret at the end of a slender stem. But there is one remarkable instance in which it is extended through a long chapter. It is that in which the defunct Governor Pyncheon is a whole night long left undiscovered, the object of the gibes and appeals, the scorn and taunts, of the author's fantasy, which gambols round the senseless clay like a jeering spirit from the abyss. The presentation, face to face, of the transient and trifling occupations and interests of this life, with the mystery and solemnities of death and the unseen realities that lie beyond it, the grave reflections and unearthly mockery, the sustained power, the eerie subject and weird-like effects, are positively terrible.

Some of the qualities we have traced in Hawthorne's works belong rather to the critical than to the constructive faculty. One effect of this is that the author is never felt to identify himself with his characters. They are not subjects into which his own life is transfused; he never loses his own

personality. The products of his imagination are always contemplated objectively; he regards them habitually in a scrutinizing, deliberative, questioning attitude. He is ever inquisitive and judicial. It would thus almost appear as if in him the creative faculty, though not inferior either in strength or activity or fineness of temper, were exercised in subserviency to the critical, — as if he peopled the world of his imagination only that he might become the witness and judge of the characters and lives, powers and tendencies, of his own creations. In one respect his writings are detrimentally affected either by this habit or by a weakness of constructive talent, to which the habit itself may be partly due. His individual characters, indeed, are delineated with wonderful minuteness, accuracy, and power. We seem to read into their very core — so far at least as the personality of any one human being can become the object of comprehension to another. But his works, considered each as a whole, especially those that aim at full development, or at being something more than sketches, are deficient in what may be called architectural structure. There is a want of the converging unity which is the condition of every perfect work of art. This may be the result, as we have said, of a defect in constructive power. His imagination, instead of embracing in one grasp the scene, characters, circumstances, and their developments, as combining to form one system, as all members of one body, elements gravitating round one centre, seizes upon them too much in detail, each as a distinct unit, related to the others only by the ideal bond of moral and spiritual influence which he has created for them. Or it may be, in some measure, due to his habit of yielding too much to what he describes in one of his characters as "that cold tendency between instinct and intellect, which makes one pry with a speculative interest into people's passions and impulses." It is also, no doubt, increased by the want of a strong framework or mould of external circumstance and connected events, which, however it may subserve some of his other aims or tendencies, leaves him more dependent for the compact unification of his tales on a power of internal integration, which he either does not possess, or does not use in sufficient force.

We are not aware whether he ever attempted the work of a professed literary critic, but he has favoured us with a piece of self-criticism, which shows what his qualifications in this direction were. Every reader must be struck with the singular fel-

city of the following extract from the preface to one of the volumes of *Twice-Told Tales*. The insight and discrimination are only equalled by the exactness and adequacy of expression. So far as the review goes, we dare say every one will subscribe to the justness and happiness of every statement, taking exception to one point only — which perhaps it would have been difficult for him to deal with fairly — the understatement of his own merits. After remarking that he rather wondered how the tales should have gained what vogue they did, than that it was so little and so gradual, he proceeds : —

“They have the pale tint of flowers that blossomed in too retired a shade — the coolness of a meditative habit, which diffuses itself through the feeling and observation of every sketch. Instead of passion, there is sentiment ; and even in what purport to be pictures of actual life, we have allegory, not always so warmly dressed in its habiliments of flesh and blood as to be taken into the reader’s mind without a shiver. Whether from lack of power, or an unconquerable reserve, the author’s touches have often an effect of tameness ; the merriest man can hardly contrive to laugh at his broadest humour ; the tenderest woman, one would suppose, will hardly shed warm tears at his deepest pathos. The book, if you would see anything in it, requires to be read in the clear, brown, twilight atmosphere in which it was written ; — if opened in the sunshine, it is apt to look exceedingly like a volume of blank pages.

“With the foregoing characteristics, proper to the productions of a person in retirement (which happened to be the author’s category at the time), the book is devoid of others that we should quite as naturally look for. The sketches are not, it is hardly necessary to say, profound ; but it is rather more remarkable that they so seldom, if ever, show any design on the writer’s part to make them so. They have none of the abstruseness of ideas, or obscurity of expression, which marks the written communications of a solitary mind with itself. They never need translation. It is, in fact, the style of a man of society. Every sentence, so far as it embodies thought or sensibility, may be understood and felt by anybody who will give himself the trouble to read it, and will take up the book in a proper mood.

“This statement of apparently opposite peculiarities leads us to a perception of what the sketches truly are. They are not the talk of a secluded man with his own mind and heart (had it been so, they could hardly have failed to be more deeply and permanently valuable), but his attempts, and very imperfectly successful ones, to open an intercourse with the world.”

His real power as a critic, however, is better seen in what he says in *Transformation* on the remains of ancient Art in Italy.

The refinement and accuracy of his perception, as shown there, are such as are found only in the true artist and critic combined. His sympathetic recognition of the central and — though often perhaps scarce consciously to himself — the guiding idea and feeling of the old sculptor or painter, enables him to breathe new life and meaning into the time-stained, earth-eaten, mutilated marble, and to translate for us into articulate speech the thoughts and feelings that moved the brush of the “old master,” — as real an achievement of genius as their expression in a stone or colour medium, though not as their original conception. Free from technical jargon, he discourses of the yellow, bruised block, or the time-mellowed canvas, till it becomes animated with fresh beauty, again instinct with the significance with which its maker strove to inspire it. Witness his criticisms of the Marble Faun, of the Dying Gladiator, of Guido’s Michael and the Dragon, of Fra Angelico’s faces and figures of sinless angelic loveliness, of Sodoma’s bound and bleeding Christ, and, above all, witness his deep insight into the subtle and elusive meanings, the profound sorrow and expression of loneliness, of the marvellous portrait of Beatrice Cenci, glancing, as it does, at some of the most solemn and awful truths of Christian faith. Some living artists also are helped to utter their best conceptions through his pen as well as through their own chisel. His interpretation of Mr. Story’s really admirable statue of Cleopatra is full of fine perception and true feeling.

We have hitherto referred to his works only incidentally, to illustrate the characteristics we have remarked in their author. We proceed now to notice the more important of them, though it must be very shortly, in succession.

His earliest attempts, we believe, at authorship, were a series of slight sketches which appeared in some of the magazines and annuals of the time, and were afterwards collected — so many of them at least as their author thought fit — in the volumes entitled *Twice-Told Tales* and *Mosses from an Old Manse*. These present many of the distinctive features of his more elaborate productions, and are full of promise of their later fruits. Some of these short pieces, especially among the “Mosses,” are as pregnant with power and beauty as anything he has given to the world, though, of course, presenting but limited scope for his microscopic analysis and artistic elaboration. “Rappaccini’s Daughter,” for example, is full of subtle effects and “the lurid intermixture” of antagonistic emotions ; of

intimations of the hidden and undeveloped affinities of humanity with nature; of the danger of mere intellectualism unconsecrated by affection and moral purpose; of warnings of how forces appointed for pure and beautiful ends may be perverted into deadly poisons. Strange and subtle sympathies are shadowed forth, that are awakened by a breath, a fragrance, the most ethereal means, typifying spiritual agencies too elusive for sense to track. The same generating spirit is transfused into the earthly child as into the plant which, as the offspring of her father's science, germinates at the hour of her birth, and establishes a mysterious sisterhood between the maiden and the flower. "Young Goodman Brown," again, is an allegorical rendering of a temptation in the wilderness into which an impure imagination can turn our hearts, and shows how all faith may be lost, and the very stays of the soul may be converted into means of hurrying it into the abyss, if the tempter be not resisted while he may. Again, the true inherent nature of falsehood, as a very plague-spot in the soul, is brought out with terrible force in "Roger Malvin's Burial," where disingenuous "concealment imparts to a justifiable act much of the secret effect of guilt." Once more, what would most writers make of the simple fact of a man choosing to hide his countenance behind a fold of black crape? Yet in "The Minister's Black Veil," from so small a root-fibre he rears a wondrous growth. By dint of his cunning power of imagination he makes this simple fact teem with significance, and converts it into a source of thrilling awe or fear to all the beholders; and reflects from their numerous hearts and faces on the reader, as on a focus, a perplexity of sentiment, till the creeping sense of mystery becomes intensified a thousand-fold. Sometimes, as in "Wake-field," by a reverse process he analyses backward, and from a single act of odd eccentricity he builds up the inner fabric of the man, as Professor Owen reconstructs an extinct animal from a tooth.

The Scarlet Letter was the first of his larger works, and is perhaps unsurpassed in the concentrated power of one or two of its scenes by anything he afterwards wrote. The interest is centred in two chief and two subordinate characters, — the two natures, originally so fine, marred by their joint sin, the minister and Hester, and the two against whom they sinned, the husband and the child. There is nothing we know of in literature at once so tender and so unflinching, so harrowingly painful, and yet so irresistibly fascinating, as the dissection

of the morbid heart of Dimmesdale, — or rather the history; for it is not its condition at any one moment, so much as its progress, step by step, from refined purity and almost saintly devotion, once wounded by momentary indulgence of unholy passion, through depths of beguiling self-knowledge and self-deception, of moral weakness and self-abasement, of passionate penance and miserable evasion, till, enfeebled to the point of collapse both physically and spiritually, his fall is perfected in yielding for an instant, under the stimulating sympathy and love of the stronger nature and more resolute will of his fellow-sinner, to a dream of unhallowed earthly life and passion, from which he is soon roused by the grim, chill, but to him not unwelcome, hand of death, to cleanse his conscience by confession. The constitution of the man is one of singular fineness and weakness. Every hour of his life he abhors himself in dust and ashes; he struggles, in almost mortal agony, to unburden himself of the concealed sin that rankles and festers in his conscience, till it eats out the whole pith of his being. In helpless cowardice and vanity he faints in the attempt, rendered doubly difficult by the devotedness and worship of his flock, and drifts into wild self-accusations of merely general sinfulness and depravity, which serve only to heighten their conception of his character and of his standard of moral purity. The misery of his life is augmented unspeakably by the fiendish process of refined torture to which he is subjected by the husband, who, living under the same roof with him, in the character of physician, seeks revenge, not in exposure, but in constantly fretting with poisonous touch the ever open wound. One cannot but regret that a nature endowed with so many noble qualities should not live more visibly to retrieve its fall. Yet we cannot doubt the reality of his late repentance, and that in his dying confession there was not only achieved the beginning of a higher life for himself, but a redeeming influence exerted for both mother and child.

Hester's character is of a stronger mould. Without being unwomanly, she is of far less effeminate texture than the man she loved so truly, and for whom she suffered so bravely. Under the hard Puritan treatment she somewhat hardens. The blazing brand upon her breast does not melt, but indurates her heart. It is true that for seven long years she had never been false to the symbol, and "it may be that it was the talisman of a stern and severe, but yet a guardian spirit." But an outcast from social intercourse and joy, her thoughts

break loose from conventional limitations, and stray in bold and perilous speculation. Pitiless condemnation and scorn drive her to justify what she had better unfeignedly repented. "What we did had a consecration of its own. We felt it so. We said so to each other." Thrown out of her true relations to society, she sees its whole fabric in false perspective, awry. "For years past she had looked from an estranged point of view at human institutions, and whatever priests or legislators had established; criticising all with hardly more reverence than the Indian would feel for the clerical band, the judicial robe, the pillory, the gallows, the fireside, or the church. The tendency of her fate and fortunes had been to set her free. The scarlet letter was her passport into regions where other women dared not tread. Shame, Despair, Solitude! These had been her teachers — stern and wild ones — and they had made her strong, but taught her much amiss." Divine law broken becomes to her human prejudice. She not only seeks to justify the past; she would vainly aim at a higher and truer life in renewal and perpetuation of the sin; and in her wild daring she carries the poor bewildered soul of the minister with her. For deliberate power and skilful handling it might be difficult to find many passages equal to that in which she fans the dying embers of hope and passion into a short-lived glow before they expire for ever.

Arrived, however, at the very summit of his fame and influence, Dimmesdale is moved by a power and virtue beyond himself to count these and all else as loss that he may win truth; and in conquering himself he is "strangely triumphant" over more than himself. Stronger as Hester has all along shown herself, she "is impelled as if by inevitable fate against her stronger will" by the power of truth and right in his last moments. The child too is subdued: "the spell is broken" that seemed all her life to have inspired her with an elf-like nature that could not be bound by enduring human sympathies. Even Roger Chillingworth, become almost the incarnation of hate and revenge, though unsoftened, is withered up into impotence for evil by this "death of triumphant ignominy." This character, indeed, though at first apt to be thrown into shadow by the more intense interest that attaches to his wife and the minister, is truly the most painful in the narrative. The laborious student, the benevolent recluse of other days, has his whole nature poisoned, his learning and sage experience of human nature turned into a curse, by the sin that had been sinned against him. — All human

kindness is dried up within him, and he lives only to keep his enemy on the rack, — to prolong the wretched man's wasting life by care and healing art, only that he may the longer enjoy his devilish work. He miserably sinks out of the circle of human activity and life when his patient's death leaves him without a purpose more.

The early manifestations of Pearl's nature and disposition are deeply significant, full of reflex lights thrown on the modifying influence, not only of parental character, though perhaps foreign to its general tone — of our progenitors; and that less by their natural and generally recognised operation in habitual life and intercourse, than by a sort of natural affection of blood, and nerve, and spirit; — intimating to us in infinitely varied speech the truth, that what is sown must be reaped — the persistent cogency of moral law, the indestructible cohesion of moral order, either in recognition and observance, or in vindication and retribution. "The child's nature had something wrong in it, which continually betokened that she had been born amiss — the effluence of her mother's lawless passion." She was wayward, fitful, impulsive, never to be reckoned on, full of wild energy, gushing affection, and imperious self-will. "There was fire in her, and throughout her; she seemed the unpremeditated off-shoot of a passionate moment." She was at once the sting and the solace of her mother's heart, and that not only by virtue of the natural relationship of child and parent, as the constant memorial of the crime in which she had been begotten, and at the same time the blessing into which God in his mercy converts for us even the fruits of our sins; but far more in the peculiarity of her disposition, as a very "messenger of anguish," and a purger of her parent's conscience. Her first baby smile is not in her mother's face, but at the scarlet letter on her breast; its gold embroidery is the first plaything which her tiny fingers grasp at; it is the chief object of her later childish curiosity. She loves in imp-like prank to associate it in her remarks with the habit the minister has of keeping his hand over his heart. With malicious pertinacity she seeks ever and again to force his acknowledgment of herself and her mother on the most public occasions. It appeared to be the very end of her life to probe and keep ever open the hidden sores of both.

The salient features of the child's nature, as well as the tendency and power of evil to perpetuate and reproduce itself, are forcibly set forth in her mother's reflections on her character: —

"Her nature — or else Hester's fears deceived

her—lacked reference and adaptation to the world into which she was born. The child could not be made amenable to rules. In giving her existence, a great law had been broken: and the result was a being whose elements were perhaps beautiful and brilliant, but all in disorder; or an order peculiar to themselves, amidst which the point of variety and arrangement was difficult or impossible to be discovered. Hester could only account for the child's character, and even then most vaguely and imperfectly, by recalling what she herself had been, during that momentous period while Pearl was imbibing her soul from the spiritual world, and her bodily frame from its material of earth. The mother's impassioned state had been the medium through which were transmitted to the unborn infant the rays of its moral life; and however white and clear originally, they had taken the deep stains of crimson and gold, the fiery lustre, the black shadow, and the untamed light, of the intervening substance. Above all, the warfare of Hester's spirit, at that epoch, was perpetuated in Pearl. She could recognise the wild, desperate, defiant mood, the flightiness of her temper, and even some of the very cloud-shapes of gloom and despondency that had brooded in her heart. They were now illuminated by the morning radiance of a child's disposition; but, later in the day of earthly existence, might be prolific of storm and whirlwind."

The House of the Seven Gables is in some respects the most elaborate and finished, if neither the most pleasing nor the most profound, of his writings. Its material is of the very slightest. The absence of incident, which we have already remarked on, has here reached its utmost; there is literally no action in the whole romance. The only event is the sudden death from apoplexy of a worldly, hardened, outwardly respectable old man, at the very time he is bent on executing the most wicked project of his life. But there is more than mere want of incident to throw the work out of the ordinary category of tales, and almost to class it with other forms of composition: the descriptive nearly swallows up every other characteristic. The dramatic element plays a comparatively insignificant part in any of Hawthorne's writings; but here its deficiency is carried to excess. The portraiture of poor Clifford's life and character, on which the author's efforts have been mainly expended, is produced by pages upon pages of unbroken description. With a wonderfully revealing power, we are told, but Clifford had hardly ever, by deed or word, himself shown us, what he is. There is no self-manifesting quality in the characters. They have all to be introduced, taken to pieces and explained, as much as if they were lay figures or psychological wax-models. But notwith-

standing this defect, the conception of Clifford is apprehended by the author so vividly, so sharply, so thoroughly, and analysed and described with such keenness, care, and minuteness, that the effect is most impressive. Line upon line is added with an elaboration that in the end is almost oppressive. Quietly and gently, touch by touch is given, till it would seem artistic finish could no further go. And it is as a marvel of artistic finish and workmanship that the piece is chiefly attractive. For Clifford, after all the pains bestowed upon him, is far from a loveable person. "An abortive lover of the Beautiful" is but an abortion after all. It is both sad and instructive to see how the mere artist-instinct, unsweetened, unpreserved by admixture of the more humanizing ingredients of heart and soul, corrupts the entire being, and crushes every more generous impulse under the demands for selfish gratification of what thus becomes a ruling passion. May not his terrible troubles have been messengers of mercy in disguise, to save from utter extinction what embers of human feeling were still capable of emitting a transient glow?

The intense all-absorbing devotion of Hepzibah forms, it is true, a pathetic contrast and relief to Clifford's refined unconscious selfishness. But the seclusion in which her pride and misfortunes have shut her up, and her many years' brooding over the one engrossing affection, the one great sorrow of her heart, have so dried up the well-spring of her nature, and narrowed her affinities with human life, that she appeals to our pity, not unmixed with ridicule, rather than to any warmer sentiment of admiration or regard.

Phoebe is, indeed, a cheery, refreshing spot in the dismal picture. We might have introduced her as an example of our author's intense sympathy with the natural and sweet ways and aims of childhood. She is no doubt on the verge of womanhood; but she has so much of the child about her, at least of the child-heart in her, before the woman is awakened by her contact with Holgrave; she is so simple, so natural, so innocent, that we forget her years in her character. But she also exemplifies another quality we have claimed for her historian,—his power to depict scenes of real life. The homely little housewife, so practical in all her thoughts and habits, so skillful in all womanly handiwork, sheds a beam of sunshine through all the gloomy house, through all the gloomier lives of her kinsfolk, by her gentle grace, her apt and winning ways, and unflagging spirit of genial activity. Every touch is realistic. We

feel her sunny smile with gladdening warmth on our hearts. She is one of those bright but homely creatures, that seem sent to teach us the too-often-forgotten lesson, that cheerfulness is not only a personal charm, but a social virtue.

Artistically, Holgrave is the least satisfactory character. He seems to us less definitely and firmly conceived, less clearly brought out, perhaps less consistent, than almost any other playing an equally prominent part in Hawthorne's works.

The pervading impression of the whole narrative is one of something very like a fate, but really far more solemn and terrible than any fate that ever brooded over Grecian tragedy, — the undying and illimitable consequences of human action and character, and the intimate ties that link the generations of man into one organic whole. The Past hangs like a murky pall of judgment over the Present, teaching us that what we are and what we do may affect those that come after us more critically, it may be, than even ourselves.

The lowest rank among his works of fiction we should be disposed to assign to *The Blithedale Romance*. It has much of the same delicacy of handling, and play of the imagination, and unimpassioned study of mental phenomena; but it does not display the same mastery and subtle fascination as the others. It may be that the subject is less fitted for his peculiar powers, or that he has undertaken it in an hour of less happy inspiration. The task he has set himself is not sufficiently composite fully to engage and call forth his strength. The entanglements and cross-purposes of the love-passages between a strong, rude, masculine nature, of noble impulse and herculean will, but narrow, uncultivated, and under the domination of one idea, and two women nearly related, but of widely different metal and temper, and both equally within the range of his attraction, for the exercise of which the circumstances are in the highest degree favourable, is almost too simple and commonplace a problem fully to charm his fancy or stimulate the peculiar bent of his genius. The circumstances of the Blithedale life were no doubt strange, but not strange enough. Besides, it is not strangeness of outward circumstances Hawthorne needs, but of inward life, — the co-existence of uncongenial emotions and irreconcilable tendencies. Still the study of the mental constitution and development of some of the characters is fine, and the book has an interest of its own, from the fact of its breaking ground untouched in any of his other works. It is his only tale which is-

sues in a tragic catastrophe; for although the murder of Miriam's model in *Transformation* may at first appear to be an event of such a nature, his character and circumstances, save as they bear on Miriam, are too incidentally interwoven into the texture of the romance to concern the reader, more than in a secondary degree, in his fortunes. His appearance is too episodic; and his fate is felt rather as the occasion of other events of interest than of vital interest itself. But Zenobia is the prominent figure in Blithedale, and her end is undeniably tragic. She is, too, the only instance of Hawthorne's essaying to delineate a character of thoroughly passionate impulse. She has none of the pale tints and pensive aspect of his other creations. He would represent her as Oriental in character, and the unflinching exotic that adorned her hair was a subtle expression of her own nature. This romance, moreover, is the only one in which he has chosen the development of the tender passion as his direct and primary theme. For this, and the modifying influence it exerts, as well as the modified forms it assumes, in minds so variously and characteristically constituted and disposed as Zenobia, Priscilla, Hollingsworth, and Coverdale, form the real interest, although the more ostensible purpose and moral of the book may be to depict the perilous, often ruinous, effects on the individual — whatever they may be to society at large, — of "what is called philanthropy, when adopted as a profession." *The House of the Seven Gables*, and *Transformation*, no doubt, deal with the subject; but in each it appears only as an accessory, — like the side scenes in a drama, or the costume to a portrait; and while harmonizing with the general effect, and affording a setting to the central object, does not divert the interest to itself.

The fundamental idea of *Transformation* is the awakening and education of a human soul from a state of simple, unconscious innocence, through crime, to a higher life of moral and spiritual struggle, in which it may be trained, not to ignore, but to combat and subdue evil. In this some will see an attempt, more or less successful, at an imaginative rendering of a great truth, that has, with varying distinctness, been the subject of human contemplation and speculation since the epoch of earliest written records of the race. Others may be disposed to trace in it a pernicious application of the Goethean doctrine that experience is the mighty teacher, the sole condition of human development, even to the point that our perfect and manifold culture demands personal acquaintance, through actual partici-

pation, with guilt; that we are but imperfect and partial, so long as our conscience is free from the darker stains with which life may besmirk it, until we have fathomed the depths, as well as scaled the heights of our inmost nature. Such a theory as this is hinted at in *The Blithedale Romance*, where Coverdale, speaking of Hollingsworth's "plan for the reformation of criminals through an appeal to their higher instincts," says, "he ought to have commenced his investigations of the subject by perpetrating some huge sin, in his proper person, and examining the condition of his higher instincts afterwards." The difficulty that would, at the outset, present itself in undertaking such a task, would be to find a human type representing, with any approach to adequacy, the original state of innocence and natural simplicity. The solution of this difficulty is found in the poetic conception of the Faun of Antiquity; and it is perhaps to his studies of classical art, while in Rome, that Hawthorne is indebted for the germinating idea of the work, as he confessedly is to the conditions of life, physical surroundings, and social atmosphere of the "Eternal City" of the present day for its details and the background. As the marble Faun of Praxiteles affords the key-note to the whole romance, we give his description of it here. After describing the externals of the statue, he thus proceeds to analyse its inner life:—

"Perhaps it is the very lack of moral severity, of any high and heroic ingredient in the character of the Faun, that makes it so delightful an object to the human eye, and to the frailty of the human heart. The being here represented is endowed with no principle of virtue, and would be incapable of comprehending such; but he would be true and honest by dint of his simplicity. We should expect from him no sacrifice or effort for an abstract cause; there is not an atom of martyr's stuff in all that softened marble; but he has a capacity for strong and warm attachment, and might act devotedly through its impulse, and even die for it at need. It is possible, too, that the Faun might be educated through the medium of his emotions, so that the coarser animal portion of his nature might eventually be thrown into the background, though never utterly expelled.

"The animal nature, indeed, is a most essential part of the Faun's composition; for the characteristics of the brute creation meet and combine with those of humanity in this strange yet true and natural conception of antique poetry and art. Praxiteles had subtly diffused throughout his work that mute mystery which so hopelessly perplexes us whenever we attempt to gain an intellectual or sympathetic knowledge of the lower orders of creation. The rid-

dle is indicated, however, only by two definite signs,—these are the two ears of the Faun, which are leaf-shaped, terminating in little peaks, like those of some species of animals. Though not so seen in the marble, they are probably to be considered as clothed in fine downy fur. In the coarser representations of this class of mythological creatures there is another token of brute kindred—a certain caudal appendage, which, if the Faun of Praxiteles must be supposed to possess it at all, is hidden by the lion's skin that forms his garment. The pointed and furry ears, therefore, are the sole indications of his wild, forest nature.

"Only a sculptor of the finest imagination, the most delicate taste, the sweetest feeling, and the rarest artistic skill—in a word, a sculptor and a poet too—could have first dreamed of a Faun in this guise, and then have succeeded in imprisoning the sportive and frisky thing in marble. Neither man nor animal, and yet no monster; but a being in whom both races meet on friendly ground! The idea grows coarse as we handle it, and hardens in our grasp. But, if the spectator broods long over the statue, he will be conscious of its spell; all the pleasantness of sylvan life, all the genial and happy characteristics of creatures that dwell in woods and fields, will seem to be mingled and kneaded into one substance, along with the kindred qualities in the human soul. Trees, grass, flowers, woodland, streamlets, cattle, deer, and unsophisticated man! The essence of all these was compressed long ago, and still exists within that discoloured marble surface of the Faun of Praxiteles.

"And, after all, the idea may have been no dream, but rather a poet's reminiscence of a period when man's affinity with nature was more strict, and his fellowship with every living thing more intimate and dear."

As a piece of Art-criticism this is very fine. But admirable as it is, it gives a very inadequate idea of the depth and thoroughness of the critical insight and exposition he brings to bear on this wonderful creation of the heathen imagination. The whole life of Donatello is an extended evolution and comment on the ideas he has here formally indicated. For his purpose, there is something marvellously suitable in the conception of the wild freshness, guilelessness, sportive exuberance, of natural life in its physical perfection, obtained in the meeting-point of man and animal; and this is worked out with a felicity and grace in the character of Donatello's yet blameless life, that vie with the production of Praxiteles itself.

We have before spoken of his fine eye for the natural innocence and purity of childhood. He has sketched the same qualities of heart and character, under an ideal aspect, in the person of Hilda, who exhibits a nature more mature and cultivated, and

enriched by the fine instincts and sympathies of an artist, but hardly less childlike than "Little Annie." The picture of her virgin life, up in her lonely tower, above the turmoil, and passion, and filth of the city, pursuing the calling of her art with self-renouncing devotion, surrounded by the flock of white doves she feeds from her window, tending the never extinguished lamp before the shrine of the Virgin at the battlemented angle of her perch-home, with a sentiment akin to natural piety, but without the superstition of the professed worshippers of "Our Lady," forms a perfect contrast, not only to the dark, passionate heart of Miriam, who supplies the relieving shadow required for artistic balance to her spotless whiteness, but also in her growth to fair and noble womanhood, unsullied apparently by base deed or foul thought, to the idea sought to be worked out in the more perilous career of Donatello attaining a higher development through personal fall and repentance. And in this, perhaps, we have an example of Hawthorne's tendency to balance every argument and opinion with its counterpoise, and of his anxiety ever to give both sides a fair hearing. The professed aim of the book is to display the educational operation of sin in awakening the conscience to a higher activity, and the rousing of the intellectual and moral nature, through passion, to a more comprehensive grasp of our position and relations in the universe. The progress of Donatello's development is meant to exhibit this. But Hawthorne would not be held to commit himself too absolutely to such a view, and side by side with the Faun-man, he seeks to show us in Hilda a being of the purest and truest instincts, of profound insight into what most vitally bears on the inner life of man, unfolding the richest blossoms of her nature with as little sense of guilt as could well be the lot of any human soul, save the mysterious shadow and burden its existence in others casts on the purest.

The first part of *Transformation*, it seems to us, is more successful than the latter portion. The growth and slow unfolding of Donatello's nature under the quickening influence of love—for it must not be overlooked that this, as well as guilt, is a teacher to him, and that his crime is not the outcome of unmixed and native evil, but of the passionate madness of a heart untutored to restraint, and moved to its depths by a not wholly ignoble enthusiasm,—his earlier life, we say, up to the period of his crime, is exquisitely fine and full of imaginative truth. The subsequent process has an air of effort, as if more the expression of reflective rea-

soning than of a vivifying imagination. We must content ourselves without more special reference to the remaining members of the quartet, as it would be impossible in a paragraph or two even to indicate the line of analysis of a character so complex as that of Miriam, on the one hand, and so devoid of salient points as that of Kenyon, on the other. In truth, to do justice to this, in some respects Hawthorne's greatest work, it would be necessary to devote to its consideration an entire article, instead of a page or two of a general review of his works. It is certainly the most mature, and, especially in the earlier half, the most delightful production of his pen. There is something in the free, joyous nature of Donatello that creates an atmosphere of freshness and health around the reader; it is as if he heard the song of birds and the babbling of brooks; as if the bright sunshine of a southern sky were overhead, but interrupted by a cool and leafy shade; as if conventional fetters were all broken, and life rejuvenized and full of the agile sportive gladness of the most wildly innocent animals. In a word, he feels as if the dream of a Golden Age were a realized fact, and all nature rejoicing, and

"—its beauty
Its sole duty."

Alongside of this perhaps too sensuous world, lying in the golden light of imagination, the fair, chaste image of Hilda smiles on him, a sanctifying presence appealing to his more spiritual aspirations on the side of intellect and culture. The combined effect is one of purity and hope, of ethereal joy and full-pulsed life.

This romance is also the author's most ambitious effort. His other works deal with isolated and peculiar cases; their interest may be profound, but it is narrow. In "the marble Faun" he takes a wider range, and in the training of Donatello seems to aim at symbolizing the education at once of the race and of each individual, from a condition of unconscious innocence and unreflecting happiness to the conscious life of a free-will agent, quickened to recognise and war with evil,—from a condition in which man is but the highest and noblest animal, to one of true humanity. Not only is the aim and scope of the book thus loftier and wider than any of the others; it includes a more varied range of interests, and supplements the main current with tributary streams. But from this spring also some of its imperfections. The effect is richer, but more divided. With the larger theme the impression is less intense. It is less uniform

in texture, and, whether from the flagging power of the writer, or from the inherent nature of the subject, the crisis is felt to be reached when the plunge into crime is made. It thus labours under the serious defect of attaining its highest point in the middle, after which the interest ebbs without a second flood. "The Scarlet Letter," for unique purpose, sustained tone, and culminating effect, must perhaps be admitted to be the more perfect work of art.

Besides the central interest of the romance, the book is full of subsidiary elements of attraction. We have already spoken of the criticisms on Art with which it abounds, and also casually referred to the delightful and accurate delineations of Italian scenery and life, and many of the monuments of world-wide interest in and around the city of the seven hills, introduced in the course of the narrative. The author seems to have imbibed the very spirit of the scenes around him. His reproduction of Roman life and locality are faithful and living to a degree that can be fully appreciated by those only who have breathed that air, heavy with the memories of centuries, and gazed around on those circling hills of amethyst, and upward into that sky of such tender ethereal pearly grey and palpitating brightness. We know no description in prose or verse that so conveys the sylvan charm of the Borghese grounds, the beauty and magic prospect from the Pincio, the spell of witchery of the Trevi waters by moonlight, the solemn grandeur and hallowed memories of the Coliseum, broken in upon by the inharmonious and impertinent mirth or borrowed sentiment of tourists, as it too often is, in its hours of most sanctified and impressive aspect, when night seems to withdraw it from the bustle and pettiness of the life of to-day into the silence and grandeur of a bygone world.

We would not, in conclusion, venture on an attempt at any estimate of our author's mental constituents, or at assigning to him a definite place in the literature of his country or language; but as, in the foregoing pages, we have dwelt mainly on what seemed to us admirable for some form of power or refinement in his literary character and works, we would now the more freely, and to prevent misconception, in a closing paragraph refer again to what we conceive to be in him a fertile source, of justness, no doubt, but far more of weakness—his indecision and balance, not of faculties, but of convictions. The pondering judicial attitude in which he so habitually holds himself leads him in many cases to offer opposing views of a question, either through the medium

of different characters, or through the puzzled and wavering introspection of one, or even sometimes through the author's own reflections and descriptions on divers occasions. He deals in few fabrics that have a decidedly right side and a wrong; and takes care to exhibit the reverse of his wares as well as the obverse. He seems endowed with a sort of intellectual polarity. In his mind questions assume formulæ which, like quadratic equations in algebra, yield a two-fold and opposite result, a solution at once positive and negative. He has no "singleness of eye"—not that the rays of mental vision ever mingle and confuse each other; on the contrary, each image is clear and sharp; but neither do they coalesce in stereoscopic solidity; they are distinct, but they are quite different. The sceptic, not in the popular, but in the strict philosophical sense of the word, enters as a large ingredient into his composition. He contemplates the world, apart, with shaded eye. He seems ever collecting evidence and information—arranging, sifting, expounding the pleas of both sides, like an impartial judge delivering his charge; but his mental jury rarely return a verdict. On the one side, it is demanded, "Who can trust the religious sentiment of Raphael, or receive any of his Virgins as heaven-descended likenesses, after seeing, for example, the Fornarina of the Barberini Palace, and feeling how sensual the artist must have been to paint such a brazen trollop of his own accord, and lovingly?" On the other, we are reminded of "Madonnas by Raphael, on whose lips he has impressed a holy and delicate reserve, implying sanctity on earth, and into whose soft eyes he has thrown a light which he never could have imagined, except by raising his own eyes with a pure aspiration heavenward." Seen from Hilda's and Kenyon's point of view, Guido's Archangel Michael "is the most beautiful and divinest figure that mortal painter ever drew," with "an expression of heavenly severity, a degree of pain, trouble, and disgust at being brought in contact with sin, even for the purpose of quelling and punishing it, and yet a celestial tranquillity pervading his whole being." The same figure calls forth from Miriam's wildly excited imagination the following scorching sarcasm:—

"That Archangel now, how fair he looks, with his unruffled wings, with his unhacked sword, and clad in his bright armour, and that exquisitely fitting sky-blue tunic, cut in the latest Paradisiacal mode! What a dainty air of the first celestial society! With what half-scornful delicacy he sets his prettily sandalled foot on

the head of his prostrate foe! But is it thus that virtue looks the moment after its death-struggle with evil? No, no; I could have told Guido better. A full third of the Archangel's feathers should have been torn from his wings, the rest ruffled, till they looked like Satan's own! His sword should be streaming with blood, and perhaps broken half-way to the hilt; his armour crushed, his robes rent, his breast gory; a bleeding gash on his brow, cutting right across the stern scowl of battle! He should press his foot hard down upon the old serpent, as if his very soul depended upon it, feeling him squirm mightily, and doubting whether the fight were half over yet, and how the victory might turn! And with all this fierceness, this grimness, this unutterable horror, there should still be something high, tender, and holy in Michael's eyes, and around his mouth. But the battle never was such child's-play as Guido's dapper Archangel seems to have found it."

And in these widely divergent criticisms, representing not merely differences of view, but antithetic types of mind, we recognise the feelings of the two classes, under one or other of which the students of Guido and Raphael mostly rank themselves. Notwithstanding his keen and profound sympathy with art and artist life, the author of *Transfiguration* declares that "a taste for pictorial art is often no more than a polish upon the hard enamel of an artificial character;" and with as little ruth as any Vandal he would obliterate the decaying remains of the revered treasures that have come down to us from the noblest pencils of early date. "Now that the colours are so wretchedly bedimmed — now that blotches of plastered wall dot the frescoes all over, like a mean reality thrusting itself through life's brightest illusions — the next best artist to Cimabue, or Giotto, or Ghirlandaio, or Pinturicchio, will be he that shall reverently cover over their ruined masterpieces with whitewash!" His imagination not only seeks, but craves for the old, the reverend, the time-hallowed, and feels scared by the spick-and-span newness of American life; yet he rails against a permanent and enduring architecture, — an art which, both in public monuments, civil and religious, and in private and domestic homesteads (where the character is nourished that feeds the national spirit), is perhaps as sure an expression as any of the stability and historic life of a people. "We shall live to see the day, I trust," says Holgrave, "when no man shall build his house for posterity. . . . If each generation were allowed and expected to build its own houses, that single change, comparatively

unimportant in itself, would imply almost every reform which society is now suffering for." And elsewhere we have a reflection of the author's own, that "all towns should be made capable of purification by fire or of decay within each half-century." What destruction, in the thought and heart of a nation, of the sense of grandeur, of traditional associations, of the reverence for the past that forms the hope and life-spring of the future, would such teaching, generally accepted and acted on, at once bear witness of, and reactively contribute to effect! We have already quoted a suggestion that vice may be but a lower form of virtue, and may ultimately be sublimed into it. But the counterbalancing statement is not wanting. "There is, I believe," says Hilda, "only one Right and one Wrong; and I do not understand how two things so totally unlike can be mistaken for one another; nor how two mortal foes, as Right and Wrong surely are, can work together in the same deed." Again, "Sin has educated Donatello, and elevated him," — and the scope of the whole book is an attempt to embody this view. "Is sin then, — which we deem such a dreadful blackness in the universe, — is it like Sorrow, merely an element of human education, through which we struggle to a higher and purer state than we could otherwise have attained? Did Adam fall that we might ultimately rise to a far loftier paradise than his?" To which we have the rejoinder, — "This is terrible. . . . Do you not perceive what a mockery your creed makes, not only of all religious sentiment, but of moral law? and how it annuls and obliterates whatever precepts of Heaven are written deepest within us?"

In some measure this oscillation may be but the expression of varying moods of a fanciful and speculative mind, that delights, "as an intellectual and moral exercise," as he himself says, in imagination to play out the part of beings hypothetically endowed with intellectual and moral attributes, and placed in hypothetical situations. In so far as it is the result of genuine doubt, sincere impartiality and candour, and dispassionate inquiry, it may indicate a character that will never command a great following; but it is surely better than the unhesitating but blind movement of a spirit of narrow partisanship and merely receptive activity, and must recommend itself to all thinking minds as a healthy discipline, and a process that must precede and underlie all well-founded belief.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE JUSTICE-ROOM.

EARLY next morning I made it my business to lay the whole case before a respectable solicitor at Mallowe; and that gentleman, together with Mr. Marten and I, were in due attendance at the justice-room. Ewen and his grandfather were also there, and young George Roper accompanied his aunt, who was present to produce the hitherto mysterious knife, which now gave such proof to Ralph Herbert's narrative. Agnes too came, in my sister's charge. But her uncle was conspicuous by his absence. He had been apprised of his son's position by the rector; and Mr. Marten said the muscles of his face had twitched sadly when he heard it, but he only said, "My son, sir? I haven't a son. It can't concern me."

It was a sufficiently commonplace scene,—the shabby justice-room, with its worn oil-cloth, and its rows of wooden chairs, and intent faces turned towards the two old gentlemen invested with the majesty of the law: kindly enough old gentlemen, who drank port at dinner, and had dainty lady-daughters and strapping sons of their own to stir their elderly hearts, but who yet seemed strangely separate from humanity when they sat down in their awful arm-chairs, and said commonplace things through the Oracle of Justice, and sprinkled magisterial snuff over the papers of the reporter beside them. That dreadful reporter, too,—whom some fear more than God or their own conscience,—he was only a lank lad of twenty, with red hair. Once or twice, as the inquiry lengthened, I noticed him adding up the lines of his report, and it struck me he was thinking of the sum he would gain by the job.

By two o'clock it was all over. There was no evidence against Ralph Herbert, but every reason to credit his story, and to believe that Mr. Roper had met his death by his own rash act. The justices shook their heads very much over it, and administered little parental reproofs all round, admonishing Mr. Marten and me for having dared to conceal the discovery of the knife from the proper authorities:—"Very wrong, very unwise, gentlemen; though we can understand your motives, gentlemen, and respect them. But it is not a safe course of action." And sniff, sniff, went a pinch of judicial snuff.

There was a little chamber opening from the justices' room, and it made a convenient refuge for all the more interested spectators. Only one did not avail himself of it.

Directly the magistrates pronounced their opinion, Ewen rose from his seat and softly left the place.

In that little brown room, with its solitary window looking on to a square flagged court with a broken pump in the middle, the two cousins met. Her face was just a little whiter than usual, and perhaps he held her hand a second longer than he held mine. That was all. He was as reserved as she; and yet, a minute afterwards, I think the recollection of her manner troubled him. It was an utterly mute greeting. There was something to be said between the two,—but not then—not there.

"Mr. Herbert will return with us to our house," said my sister. "You will come also, Agnes, will you not?"

"I must go home to my uncle now," she answered quite calmly. "So, good-bye, Ralph! I shall see you again before night."

They shook hands again, and he went with her to the door. When he rejoined us, his face was sadder and more concerned than it had been at any time during the morning.

"She has given me up," he said, as we ushered him into our parlour. "For her sake, I ought to be very glad, but I can't."

"Wait a while," answered Ruth rather grimly, "and don't show your selfishness before you muse."

My sister utterly refused to be won over to the side of Mr. Ralph. Except one or two curt remarks, she was courteous to him, as a stranger and in trouble, but no more. Immediately after our early tea, she announced that she should pay a visit to the Refuge. She had scarcely departed on this errand, before Agnes fulfilled her promise of an evening visit. Of course, directly she entered, I left the room. I am an old man, but my memory is not yet decayed. I remember how it troubled me when Lucy's father called us that evening in the fields, and when her mother chanced to stand at her side the next morning. To this day, I wish it had not so happened.

I went up-stairs to my own chamber, and tried to read. Sometimes, in the profound silence, I caught a tone of the earnest talk in the room beneath me. I heard Ralph walk up and down after the fashion of perturbed or excited people; and so the time wore wearily away, until Ruth knocked at the hall-door, and then I went down and admitted her, because I did not wish her to interrupt the pair in the parlour. So I mysteriously beckoned her into another room, and then explained myself.

"There's no peace anywhere because of

some courting couple," said she, very tartly. "I have just been driven from the Refuge, because Mr. Weston chose to arrive. As for these two, they have had enough. Been here ever since I left, you say? That's two hours. I shall go in, whether you will or not."

Somewhat under protest, I followed her. Ralph was in my arm-chair, and Agnes was seated on a very low stool beside him. She had been crying, but now she smiled and was very rosy.

"Tell them, Ralph," said she.

"I spoke to you about Canada, last night, sir," he began with some hesitation. "My friend starts next month, and we hope to be ready to join him — Agnes and I!"

"My uncle has given permission," she whispered.

"And, of course, he thinks we encouraged you!" said Ruth, severely.

"No, he doesn't!" she answered, warmly. "I told him all about it."

"And you asked his consent?" I queried.

"I told him all about it," she replied humbly, "and he said I might do as I liked; — I was of age, and he wouldn't hinder me."

Was this some secret relenting — some hidden joy that God had given one faithful friend to the son whom he had deserted?

"Then let me wish you happiness, my dear," I said, laying my hand on the brown head, bowed low enough in this moment of womanly triumph; "then let me wish you all peace and happiness after your trial and sorrow — the sweet sunshine after the rain!"

Ralph Herbert turned to my sister. "You say nothing," he said, in a tone of sorrowful reproach.

"Yes, I do," she answered, more kindly than she had spoken before, and laying her hand gently upon his. "I don't say, May she never regret this day! — for she never will — but I pray that on your dying bed you may remember it with thanksgiving, and not remorse!"

"God helping me, so I will!" he said solemnly. And I am sure he meant it.

CHAPTER XXXI.

A WEDDING WITH BELLS.

THE very next day after the inquiry in the justice-room, Ruth had a petition presented to her.

It was Mr. Weston's. He came — shyly enough, but with the confidence of eager hope — to beg my sister to join him in persuading Alice McCallum to leave the Refuge in a month's time. This was how he stated the case, with a blush and a roguish smile.

"Leave the Refuge!" said my sister, with arch innocence: "then where is she going, sir?"

He made a fine boggle of an answer, which was intended to embrace excuses and reasons for his own haste. "If she'd said 'Yes,' when I asked her first, I should have named a day in early spring," he stammered; "and why shouldn't it be now as if it had never been? She's looking fagged and white, and the change of scene 'll do her good. And the Meadow Farm's quite ready for its mistress. And what things does she want? Can't she get them when she's there? Only she says you won't like such a short notice."

"Oh, I am not the person to be considered," said Ruth drily. "You'd better not consult my pleasure, or I shall say I don't like any notice at all!"

Mr. Weston took the little joke in good part, and laughed heartily. "You're right, Miss Garrett," he answered, quite jovially. "I should not like *her* to give *me* notice."

"Should you not?" queried Ruth. "Ah, — I have heard some people are never so happy as when they are miserable, and I suppose that is why they rush into matrimony, although the 'single state is most conducive to happiness.'"

Mr. Weston reddened a little and laughed again. "Don't laugh at a poor fellow for saying the grapes were sour when they seemed out of his reach," said he. "I always pitied that fox in the fable."

"Well, he *was* pitiable," rejoined my sister; "but if he had gained the grapes and then praised them. I should have told him he was a coward before."

"When he has gained the grapes, he is so fortunate that he can afford to be called anything," said the young man, good-humouredly.

The simple kindly farmer was far further in Ruth's good graces than the polished son of the Great Farm. She actually went with him to the Refuge, and had a long conversation with Alice and her grandfather, for Ewen had returned to London that morning with Mr. Herbert. And when Ruth returned, she brought the news that the old adage that one wedding makes another was fulfilled in this case, and that there would be two marriages at St. Cross, while the primroses were out in the churchyard.

And for a whole month I was a quiet shadow in the background — a person with no valuable opinions on the subjects in hand — linens, and dresses, and ribbons. I heard that Mr. Weston wished to place in Ruth's hand a considerable sum of money for the disposal of his bride, only Alice

would not hear of it. She said he must take her with what she could get herself, and he said it didn't matter to him, so I think her bridal attire would have been exceedingly simple but that Ruth's wedding gift was the wedding dress. Mr. Weston was not at all offended because Alice accepted *that*. It was a grey silk, rich and delicate, but suited alike to the bride's loveliness, and the bridegroom's position.

After all, her wedding came first. The Herberts' was fixed a single day later. Ewen arrived the evening before his sister's marriage, and said Mr. Herbert would not come until the eve of his own. And Ewen tried to keep his face bright for his sister's joy. But all the more it haunted me with that inexpressible pain which often makes weddings more sad than funerals, — the suffering of Life instead of the peace of Death.

It was a laughing spring morning, and in homely phrase the village was "alive." St. Cross was crowded, for the McCallums were old residents, and rendered none the less interesting by the melancholy circumstances through which they had so innocently suffered. When the bridal party stood in the chancel, I heard an old lady whisper that it was a "pretty wedding," and I think she was right. In the immediate circle the fine old grandfather, the comely bridegroom, the sweet bride, the little orphan bridesmaids in their fresh muslins, and the grave handsome groomsmen — all were pleasing and picturesque after their own fashion. And, standing behind these, Ruth and Bessie and young Roper did not spoil the scene. And the background was made up of eager interested faces, all bright in the sunshine, which poured in through the clear windows and brought with it a sweet breath from the budding trees outside. And then the solemn service which folds the joy of man in the sanctity of God, and the happy tears, and the fond kisses, and the poor trembling maiden signature in the vestry. And then the merry bells, telling heath and hamlet that God has consecrated another home — and the ride through familiar faces that nobody sees — and the dainty meal that nobody tastes — and the good-byes — and then the silence afterwards.

Agnes was not at the wedding. It was her last day at home. A very sad last day — when she might not weep nor smile except as her wont — when she must go about everything as if to-morrow, and the next day, and the next would be the same. Her uncle knew it was her last day in his house, he had only said "Very well," when she told him so, and by this silence, she knew to be silent herself.

After the morning's excitement I sat listlessly at our window, watching for Ralph Herbert, who was to be our guest for that night. I did not know whether to expect a visit from Agnes, and I was very pleased when she entered.

"I hear the wedding went off well," she said. "I have written a letter to Alice, that she may receive it in her new home to-night."

For I should have mentioned that this simple country bride had gone straight from her old home to her husband's house, as he could ill spare a long holiday at this time of the year, when his fields needed their master's eye.

"Very thoughtful of you, my dear," I answered; "and what finery have you there?" for she had a small parcel in her hand.

"Only all my trousseau!" she replied, laying a dainty pair of lilac gloves upon the table, and looking up with an arch smile about her lips and pathos in her eyes.

It was quite true. For her honeymoon was to be passed in no luxurious hotel, her home would be no fresh flowery bride-chambers. By nightfall after her wedding she would be in the seaport town whence the American ship sailed. By the next sunset, she would be on the sea — drifting to a new life in a rough settler farm. And so it was an emigrant's outfit and not a bride's, which filled the great boxes that encumbered our hall.

She had not been with us many minutes before she rose to go.

"Will you not wait to see your cousin?" asked Ruth; "he will be here presently."

"No," she said, "I must go — back. Tell him I left him my love, but I want to stay with my uncle as long as I can. I only left home now because he was out among his men."

I walked home with her in the twilight, speaking of the arrangements for the morrow. Nobody but those concerned knew what was about to happen. The honest labourers who touched their foreheads as Agnes passed, little dreamed it was a farewell salutation. There was something unspeakably touching in the girl going so brave and so lonely from one life to another, not even knowing her own courage and loneliness, but with the sweet perversity of womankind, only the more reliant on Ralph's protection because it was but a cypher — all the prouder of him, because there was little to be proud about!

When I shook hands with her at the gate of the Farm, she held my hand a little, and probably thinking this was our last moment

of undisturbed converse, she thanked me for all that Ruth and I had tried to do for her — speaking so eagerly and fervently of all the past, and yet looking so confidently and quietly into her strange dim future, that my heart was strangely stirred. But she made one omission which pained me. In her rapid anxious review of all to whom she owed any kindness, she never even named Ewen, to whom, especially for Ralph's sake, she owed so much. And I interrupted her to say —

"Nobody has shown you or Ralph more than the common kindness of humanity — except young McCallum. I hope you quite understand what he has done. *He* deserves thanks."

"Understand what he has done?" she echoed. "Thank him? Mr. Garrett, Ewen McCallum is a saint, and I am only a woman!"

And she turned and obeyed the deep bay of Griff, impatiently awaiting her within the house. I stayed at the gate until she crossed the garden, and fairly closed the house-door behind her. But she never turned her head.

And that was the night before the wedding.

CHAPTER XXXII.

A WEDDING WITHOUT BELLS.

OUR breakfast party on the wedding morning was somewhat constrained and silent. Ralph had joined us very late the night before, and we had then no time for conversation, nor did we seem inclined for any when we gathered round the table for our morning meal. We were in our trim for the ceremony, that is to say I wore my neatest tie, and Ruth her best silk dress, for no other attempt at gala attire was possible. The parlour too was "tidied" in Ruth's strictest sense of the word; not a shred of work or writing remained about, and the china bowls and vases were duly filled with fresh primroses and hyacinths. That was the extent of our preparation. But when Phillis brought in our toast and new-laid eggs, I thought by her glance at our visitor that she had a shrewd guess at what was going forward, though she had heard no remark to lead her to such conclusion, and though there was nothing in the refreshments which Ruth had ordered to awaken conjecture. For there could be no sugary wedding breakfast, with cakes, and champagnes, and trifles, but a repast of savoury joints and poultry, substantial enough to carry the young couple to their seaport destination.

There was a solemnity about the aspect of affairs, which crept over each of us. The very morning was solemn — not cloudy, but with a low-toned steady sun-light, and a cool still air. The shadows on our garden plot did not dance, but lay straight and still. The parlour too, with the signs of ordinary life all banished, had a conventual air, consistent with bated voices and silent smiles. But even silent smiles were lacking. Yet when I thought of all this day was in Ralph's life, I could not wonder at his pale grave face, or the reddened lightless eyes that told of a sleepless night. True, he had achieved a great happiness — to him, unworthy as he felt himself, had fallen that good gift which Solomon tells us comes directly "from the Lord." But I liked the youth no less because he took his blessing with awe and trembling, nor because he did not prepare to leave his fatherland with a laugh upon his lips. Alone, he might have gone recklessly enough. Going alone, he might have said his native country cast him off, and so turned his face to another shore, and never looked behind. But now that one went with him, nothing fearing, he felt tenderly for the old place that spared him its best, and his heart yearned over the very fields where he had walked and talked with one so pure and true. I daresay his feeling was something like that expressed in those lines of an old song, which I remember once reading, where one emigrant says to another —

"'Tis not the future makes me grieve:
But though the past is sad,
I weep my grateful thanks to God
For pleasant times I've had!"

Of course he made one at our little service of family worship. It is our custom to hold that service immediately after breakfast. Ruth and I agreed that it was inconsiderate to summons servants to such a duty before they had taken some refreshment after their early household work. At the risk of being thought a monotonous formalist, I must explain our form of worship. I take our prayers from the book of Common Prayer — first, the general confession of sin, then the prayer for all conditions of men, concluding with the collect for the preceding Sunday, and that is all, except on any special occasion, when I take a special petition from the Litany. For a Scripture portion I read the New Testament lesson for the day. I have often noticed how strangely appropriate these appointed portions seem, and never more so than when, on this 4th of March, I found it my duty to

read the fifteenth chapter of St. Luke's Gospel. As I announced it I involuntarily glanced at Ralph. He did not need to seek it—his Bible opened at the place, for the page was marked by a dried spray of that delicate fern which is, I think, called "maiden-hair."

When we arose from our knees, it was time to prepare for church. Ralph was the first to depart, Ewen would join him on the road—the only wedding guest beside ourselves. We waited at our window until Agnes appeared, coming steadily and gravely along the road. Then we left our house, and she came up to us with a quiet simple salutation, and took her place by my sister's side. But behind her, followed an attendant on whom we had not counted, even the great dog Griff, walking with a dignified solemnity fit for the occasion.

"Yes, he must come," said his mistress, responding to our glances. "Griff goes with us. Ralph arranged that. Griff is a faithful old friend, and must not be left behind."

"But what will he do at the church?" I asked, in dismay.

"He will wait in the porch," she answered.

I scarcely liked to ask about her parting with her uncle, but presently she raised her eyes and said, "I have said good-bye to uncle. He did not give me a chance of saying a word; but he knows he is not likely to see me again, and he spoke very kindly." And there the low voice faltered, and the brown eyes filled with tears, which did not overflow, as very sad tears seldom do.

We went up the churchyard way, and entered the silent house of God, with its long, misty sunbeams slanting over the empty pews. Ralph and Ewen stood in the chancel in the coloured light of the stained window. The rector saw our entrance through the half-open vestry door, and he came out, gowned, and went behind the communion rails.

There was a moment's silence—a pause—before the mysterious gate through which two lives would pass into one. Agnes was the calmer of the two, with her pale face and veiled eyes, for I saw Ralph grasp the rail before him, like one thankful for any support, while his eyes wandered vaguely to the scrolls above the table, and his lips moved in unconscious recitation of those words whose full, sweet meaning scarcely seemed for him: "Like as a *father* pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him."

Then the service began—the service

which I had heard only the day before, but which, however solemn then, now seemed to have a new and thrilling minor key. I could scarcely trust my voice in the few simple responses, but there was one whose tones rang out clear and firm in each. It was Ewen. Somehow, I could not look at him. Without a glance, I could see his figure standing behind the bridegroom, generally erect, though the head bowed once or twice. Ah, the wedding might seem dreary in its solemn love and daring, bare of all those sweet little charities which generally drape such scenes in mists of tearful smiles and smiling tears, but many a bridal, with troops of congratulating friends, might envy that one loyal and true wedding guest, poor indeed, lowly as yet, — though I think the day may come when Agnes will be proud to say who stood behind her bridegroom—but who bravely brought all he had, even his own heart, and laid it as a willing offering on the marriage altar.

One or two hearty sobs, startling the rector's eyes from his book, warned us that some interested spectator had stolen upon our solitude; and when all was over, and we left the vestry, where Agnes had signed the name that she need not change, and Ruth had kissed her, and I had blessed her, and Ewen had touched her hand—very lightly—and said never a word, then we found Sarah Irons seated on a back seat, indulging herself in a "good cry." And I was glad to see that Ralph Herbert did not shrink from the honest servant's fond embrace. Ah, surely henceforth every woman, however plain and homely, will be sacred to him for the sake of one! The old Crusaders held their chivalry in the name of "Our Ladye." And should not every man be gentler and braver for the sake of the woman in his heart, whether her image stand at a hearth or in a shrine?

"I've left a letter for you from the master at your house, sir," whispered Sarah, detaining me a minute after the young people passed out. "'O' course I don't know what's in it, but it can't part 'em now, thank God!"

No bells, no whispering faces, no huzzas, only the breeze stirring a little in the new-budded boughs, and one or two villagers looking from their doors, with a little wonder and curiosity, to see the squire's son and niece once more walking together, and that as quietly and soberly as if it were quite a matter of course.

According to instructions, we found a substantial meal spread in our parlour, and Phillis in watchful, *coruscous* attendance. The letter from Mr. Herbert lay beside my

plate, and I did not venture to touch it until dinner was over. I might have spared my fears.

"DEAR SIR" (*it ran*), — "I have just parted from my niece Agnes, who has been a good and dutiful niece to me, though not as wise as she might have been. Now, I do not like that the last daughter of the Herberts of Upper Mallowe should leave her home with no portion but the beggarly produce of a book of verses and stories. Therefore I enclose ten fifty-pound notes, which I hope will be useful to her. I would have taken care to bind this sum upon her, but she's one of those women you can't take care of, because she's determined to throw herself away. — I remain, yours truly,

"RALPH HERBERT, Sen."

I silently placed the letter and its enclosure before the young couple. They read it through, and looked at each other.

"Ralph," said Agnes, very softly, "now you may go and say good-bye to uncle."

"He will not see me," he answered, sadly; "and, besides, we have no time."

"He will see you if I ask him now," she returned; "and we will go on our way to the station."

Their boxes had all been despatched there in a cart, and so the little journey was to be made on foot. At the gate of the Great Farm, Agnes turned and said, "Mr. Garrett and I will go in together."

But we found the hall-door open, and so Ralph advanced into the porch, and stood there to await his fate, while my sister and Ewen lingered beyond the garden palings.

The strange stillness of the early morning had passed away, and there was a lively breeze astir. It swept through the open hall and lightly rustled the curtains of Agnes' deserted parlour, and I heard the low of cattle from the meadows behind the house. But Agnes did not heed the familiar sights and sounds, she walked straight forward to the dining-room; its door, too, was open, and the room was in a flood of fresh spring sunshine. At the far end of the long table, just before the quaint window, with its treasures of blooming hyacinths and crocuses, sat Mr. Herbert. He did not heed our footsteps — perhaps he did not even hear them. His arms were spread over the table, and his head was laid upon them. I don't know whether it was owing to the strong light or to his attitude, but, for the first time, I noticed many white hairs among his glossy brown. Agnes stopped to notice nothing; she went straight up to him, and sat suddenly down

on the floor, and laid her cheek on his knee.

"Uncle!" she cried.

He started up, half bewildered, and caught her in his arms. "My darling, my pretty one!" he exclaimed. "But you're not mine now; I could not keep you."

"Uncle!" she cried again, putting her arms round his neck, the tears raining down her face, — "Uncle, my husband wants to thank you for all your kindness to me. Let him come!"

Mr. Herbert half shook off the clasp of those gentle arms, but they were firm with the might of love. If he did not own Ralph as his son, she chose him for her husband! He hesitated, and Agnes kissed him again, and her tears fell on his hands.

"Let him come!" said he.

I went softly, and led him in. I did not re-enter the room. Nay, I closed the door behind Ralph, for there are some scenes which strange eyes ought not to see — some words which only God may hear!

Half-an-hour afterwards they came out — all three. They walked together to the station, and Ewen and Ruth and I followed behind. On the platform stood old Mr. McCallum, and George and Miss Sanders. George had a nosegay for Agnes.

Mr. Herbert was almost inclined to go with them to the seaport, but he did not.

"It's parting either here or there," he said, "so we'll get it over at once. But somebody's going to see you off, I suppose?"

"I am," said Ewen. "I will be with them till the last!"

"You're a good fellow!" responded the farmer.

A shriek from the engine, and Agnes, already seated in the carriage, placed her hand in her husband's. Ewen sat opposite. Another shriek, a smile, nods, and a burst of tears, and they were off. And we heard Griff's growl, as the dog-carriage passed us.

God bless the bride and bridegroom! And God bless Ewen! He smiled as he looked from the window; and so I know how the men smile at the stake or on the rack. And yet he will be all the better for this anguish. A pure love never harmed any man. Love and sorrow have sung the world's sweetest songs, and painted its fairest pictures, and achieved its greatest deeds. So some day, perhaps, Ewen will make a picture of an emigrant ship, and the agony which was in his heart he will paint in the faces there, so that they shall stir the souls of all that gaze thereon into that human tenderness whence grows

"That best portion of a good man's life,
His little nameless, unremembered acts
Of kindness and of love."

Oh, let us thank God for the love and sorrow of genius! Yet, let us thank Him reverently, as we thank Him for all the blessings which come to us, by the sacrifice and pain of others. We take the flowers that blossom from the thorny stems, but they long for the time when the Master's eye shall see that the fruit is ripe, and His hand shall gather it in. I remember one verse in Agnes' father's book:—

"O 'tis hard to hear them praise us for the music we have learned
From the sobs we choked within us, and the hidden tears that burned;
When the poet goes to God, sure he leaves his harp behind,
For the song they sing in heaven is of quite another kind."

A POSTSCRIPT BY MISS GARRETT.

Now Edward has finished his love-story, I hope he will listen to me when I want to talk to him about the Refuge or the Hospital. For it seems to me uncommonly like a love-story, though it professes to be a record of what an old man and woman are able to do, when they sit down to rest and take breath before they go into the King's presence.

We've heard from Agnes and Ralph. They are settled in Canada, and Agnes says they are doing very well, but how is one to believe her? I shall not be surprised if Mr. Herbert goes out after them. For in this world, wonders never cease. The other evening when I was at the Great Farm, in the dining-room, where that portrait's face is now decently turned forward, he almost cried while he pointed out a mark on the rug, worn by Griff's paws, where he used to hold on when Mr. Herbert tried to push

him away to make room for his own feet. Now if that is not rank sentiment and just like people, I don't know what is! I should not have pushed the poor dog aside, and then I should have had no mark in the rug to cry over, and so I suppose people would say I had no feeling! But I don't care what they say.

Bessie manages the Hospital famously, and her nephew lives with her. Phillis is matron at the Refuge now, and Mr. McCallum says she does very well indeed. The old man would not leave his poor people even to go and sit in the chimney corner at Meadow Farm, where Alice and her husband live in great happiness and prosperity. They have a little daughter, and Edward and I are the godfather and godmother. Alice thought she should be christened after me, and so did I, but Edward said she must be a "Lucy," because that was a family name with the Westons. Family name indeed—I daresay he cares a great deal for family names! But as he says nothing, I don't take any notice. If it pleases him to keep a secret, let him think he keeps it, that's all!

Ewen does not come very often to Upper Mallowe, at least he does not stay very long when he does come. He does not go to the counting-house now, but is "an artist all out," as his grandfather says. But he says he will return to business the moment his art is a labour to him, because it is not right to turn God's gift into a machine. He is a very fine young man, but I hear that people say he is stern and haughty. Nobody ever believes in a volcano which keeps itself to itself, and does not rampage and destroy everything around it.

But I can't write any more, for the Refuge bills are just sent in, and there's a basket of linen to sew for the Hospital. It's very well to write about work, but it's better to do it!

HISTORICAL DIFFICULTIES AND CONTESTED EVENTS. By Octave Delepiere, LL. D. (Murray.)—M. Delepiere discusses various historical questions, some about which the learned still differ, and others about which they have come to an agreement, without, however, entirely destroying the popular belief. Whether the Colossus bestrode the harbour of Rhodes, whether there was ever such a personage as Pope Joan, may be taken as specimens of the latter class; the history of the library of Alexandria and the fate of Jeanne d'Arc belong to the former. M. Delepiere, who seems to have consulted all the available authorities, generally takes the sceptical side, and sometimes we think goes too far in his scepticism. Some of the details of the story of William Tell, for instance, are very probably fabulous, but the fact

of their occurring in various legends does not actually prove them to be so unless they are intrinsically incredible. It is not *impossible* that Gessler may have heard of the trial of shooting at an apple on a child's head, and determined on putting it to a practical proof. And surely there is evidence for Charles V. having ordered the performance of some ceremonies, which were, at the least, very strange and unusual, in anticipation of his death. There was something of this hypochondria in his blood, and it came out very strongly in some of his descendants. In one instance, that of Jeanne d'Arc, M. Delepiere takes the romantic view, believing that the Maid was not burnt at Rouen, but lived to be happily married afterwards.

Spectator.

CHAPTER LXI.

LADY CULDUFF'S LETTER.

A LONG letter, of several pages, from Marion reached the villa; and though it is not my intention to ask the reader to listen to it textually or throughout, I crave permission to give certain parts of its contents.

As Lady Culduff prospered in the world, she became what she thought "devout," and perpetually reminded all around her that she was well aware she was living in a very sinful world, and keeping daily company with transgressors; and she actually brought herself to believe that by repeated reference to the wickedness of this life, she was entering a formal protest against sin, and qualifying herself, at this very cheap price, for something much better hereafter.

She was—and it was a pet phrase with her—"resigned" to everything: resigned to Lord Culduff's being made a grand cross and an ambassador, with the reasonable prospect of an earldom; resigned to her own great part—and was it not a great part?—in this advancement; resigned to be an ambassadress! That she was resigned to the ruin and downfall of her family, especially if they should have the delicacy and good taste to hide themselves somewhere, and not obtrude that ruin and downfall on the world, was plainly manifest; and when she averred that, come what might, we ought to be ever assured that all things were for the best, she meant in reality to say it was a wise dispensation that sent herself to live in a palace at Pera, and left her brothers and sisters to shiver out existence in barbarism.

There was not a shadow of hypocrisy in all this. She believed every word she said upon it. She accepted the downfall of her family as her share of those ills which are the common lot of humanity; and she was very proud of the fortitude that sustained her under this heavy trial, and of that proud resignation that enabled her not to grieve over these things in an unseemly fashion, or in any way that might tell on her complexion.

"After that splendid success of Culduff's at Naples," wrote she, "of which the newspapers are full, I need not remind you that we ought to have had Paris, and, indeed, must have had it, but the Ministry made it a direct and personal favour of Culduff that he would go and set that troublesome Eastern question to rights. As you know nothing of politics, dear Nelly, and, indeed, are far happier in that ignorance, I shall not enter upon what, even with the fullest explanation, would only bewilder you. Enough if you

know that we have to out-mancœuvre the Russians, baffle the French, and bully the Greeks; and that there is not for the task Culduff's equal in England. I think I see your astonishment that I should talk of such themes: they were not certainly the sort of subjects which once occupied our thoughts; but, my dear Nelly, in linking your fate to that of a man of high ambition, you accept the companionship of his intellect, instead of a share in his heart. And, as you well know I always repudiated the curate and cottage theory, I accept the alternative without repining. Can I teach you any of this philosophy, Nelly, and will it lighten the load of your own sorrow to learn how I have come to bear mine? It is in the worldliness of people generally lies their chief unhappiness. They will not, as Culduff says, 'accept the situation.' Now we have accepted it, we must submit to it, and, in consequence, suffer fewer heartburnings and repinings than our neighbours. Dear Augustus never had any costly tastes; and as for yourself, simplicity was your badge in everything. Temple is indeed to be pitied, for Temple, with money to back him, might have made a respectable figure in the world and married well; but Temple a poor man, must fall down to a second-class legation, and look over the Minister's larder. Culduff tried, but failed to make something of him. As C. told him one day, you have only to see Charles Mathews act, to be convinced that to be a coxcomb, a man must be consummately clever; and yet it is exactly the 'rôle' every empty fellow fancies would suit him. T. resented this, well meant as it was, and resigned his secretaryship. He has gone over to England, but I do not imagine with much prospect of re-employment.

"Do not think, my dear Nelly, of quitting your present refuge. You are safe now, and in harbour, and be slow to adventure on that wide ocean of life where shipwrecks are occurring on every hand. So long as one is obscure, poverty has no terrors. As Culduff says, you may always wear a ragged coat in the dark. It is we, who unfortunately must walk in the noon-day, cannot be seen unless in fine raiment. Do not mistake me, however. I say this without complaint; I repine at nothing.

"I had written so much of my letter, dear Nelly, intending to finish it at Rome; but Culduff is obliged to hurry on to Ischl, where some great diplomatic gathering is now assembled, and I must omit a number of things I desire to say to you.

"Culduff thinks we must call on Lady Augusta as we go through. I own I have

done my best to avoid this, and if I must go, it will not be in the best of tempers. The oddest thing of all is, C. dislikes her fully as much as I do; but there is some wonderful freemasonry among these people that obliges them, like the members of a secret society, to certain 'égards' towards each other; and I am satisfied he would rather do a positive wrong to some one in middle-class life than be wanting in some punctilio or attention to a person of her condition. I have often been much provoked by displays of this sentiment, needlessly paraded to offend my own sense of propriety. I shall add a line after my visit.

"ROME.

"I have news for you. M. Pracontal — if this be his name — not only takes your estates, but your stepmother. The odious woman had the effrontery to tell us so to our faces. How I bore it, what I said, or felt or suffered, I know not. Some sort of fit, I believe, seized me, for Culduff sent for a physician when I got back to the hotel, and our departure was deferred.

"The outrage of this conduct has so shaken my nerves that I can scarcely write, nor is my sense of indignation lessened by the levity with which it pleases Culduff to treat the whole matter. 'It is a bold coup — a less courageous woman would have recoiled from it — she is very daring.' This is what he says of her. She has the courage that says to the world, 'I am ready to meet all your censures and your reproaches;' but I never heard this called heroism before. Must I own to you, Nelly, that what overwhelms me most in this disgraceful event is the confidence it evinces in this man's cause. 'You may swear,' said Culduff, 'that she is backing the winner. Women are timid gamblers, and never risk their money without almost every chance in their favour.' I know that my lord plumes himself on knowing a great deal about us, prompting him at times to utter much that is less than complimentary; but I give you this opinion of his here for what it is worth, frankly owning that my dislike to the woman is such I can be no fair judge of any case into which she enters.

"Pracontal — I only saw him for an instant — struck me as a third-class Frenchman, something between a 'sous-officier' of cavalry and a *commis-voyageur*; not ill-looking, and set up with that air of the soldier that in France does duty for dignity. He had a few hasty words with Culduff, but did not persist nor show any desire to make a row in presence of ladies. So far, his instincts as a corporal guided him safely.

Had he been led by the *commis-voyageur* side of his character, we would have had a most disgraceful scene, ending by a hostile meeting between a British peer and a bag-man.

"My nerves have been so shaken by this incident, and my recollection is still so charged with this odious woman's look, voice, and manner, that I cannot trust myself to say more. Be assured, dear Nelly, that in all the miserable details of this great calamity to our family, no one event has occurred equal in poignant suffering to the insult I have thus been subjected to.

"Culduff will not agree to it, but I declare to you she was positively vulgar in the smirking complacency in which she presented the man as her future husband. She was already *passée* when she married my father, and the exuberant joy at this proposal revealed the old maid's nature. C., of course, calls her charming, a woman of very attractive qualities, and such like; but men of a certain age have ideas of their own on these subjects, and, like their notions on cookery, make no converts among people under forty. I believe I told him so, and, in consequence, the whole theme has been strictly avoided by each of us ever since."

The remainder of the letter was devoted to details as to her future life at Constantinople, and the onerous duties that would devolve on her as *ambassadress*. She hinted also at a time when she would ask dear Nelly to come and visit her; but, of course, until matters were fully settled and concluded, she could not expect her to leave dear Gusty.

The postscript ran thus: — "Culduff meant to have given some small Church promotion to young L'Estrange, and, indeed, believed he had done so; but some difficulty has arisen. It is either not his turn, or the Bishop is troublesome, or the Ecclesiastical Commissioners — if there be such people — are making objections. If he — I mean L'Estrange — be still disengaged, would it be wise to offer him the chaplaincy to the embassy? I mean wise as regards ourselves; for I take it the sister may still be unmarried, and, if she be like what I remember her, a person not easily suppressed, nor at all indisposed to assume airs of perfect equality, even with those separated from her by a whole hemisphere of station. Give me your candid advice on this point, not thinking of *them*, but of *me*, for, though I feel Julia — is not that her name? — would be insupportable, the parson himself would be very useful, and I think a comfort to me.

"Of course you will not consult any one

upon this matter. It is your own personal opinion I want, and you will give it to me, knowing me and my prejudices — I suppose I had better call them — and not thinking of your own leanings and likings for the girl. She may, for aught I know, have changed. Culduff has some wise saw about acid wines growing dry by age; I don't know whether young ladies mellow in this fashion, but Julia was certainly tart enough once to have tested the theory, and might be the 'Amontillado' of old maids by this time."

It may be imagined that after a sally of this kind it was not easy for the writer to recover that semi-moralizing vein in which the letter opened. Nor did she. The conclusion was abrupt, and merely directed Nelly to address her next to the Summer Palace at Therapia; "for those horrid people, our predecessors, have left the embassy-house in such a condition it will take weeks and several thousand pounds to make it habitable. There must be a vote taken 'in supply' on this. I am writing Greek to you, poor child; but I mean they must give us money, and, of course, the discussion will expose us to many impertinences. One writer declared that he never knew of a debate on the estimates without an allusion to Lord Culduff's wig. We shall endure this — if not with patience, without resentment. Love to dear Gusty, and believe me your affectionate sister,

"MARION CULDUFF."

Such were the most striking passages of a long letter which, fortunately for Nelly, Mr. Cutbill's presence at the breakfast-table rescued her from the indiscretion of reading aloud. One or two extracts she did give, but soon saw that the document was one which could not be laid on the table, nor given without prejudice to the public service. Her confusion, as she crumpled up the paper, and thrust it back into its envelope, was quickly remarked, and Mr. Cutbill, with his accustomed tact, observed, "I'd lay a 'fiver' we've all of us been led out for a canter in that epistle. It's enough to see Miss Ellen's face to know that she wouldn't read it out for fifty pounds. Eh, what!" cried he, stooping and rubbing his leg; "I told you to say, 'Stop her,' Master Jack, when you wanted to take way off, but I never said, 'Kick my shins.'"

This absurd exclamation, and the laugh it provoked, was a lucky diversion, and they arose from the table without another thought on Marion's epistle.

"Has Nelly shown you Marion's note?" asked Jack, as he strolled with Julia through the garden.

"No, and it is perhaps the only letter I ever knew her to get without handing me to read."

"I suspect, with Cutbill, that we all of us catch it in that pleasant document."

"You perhaps are the only one who has escaped."

"As for me, I am not even remembered. Well, I'll bear even that, if I can be sure of a little sympathy in another quarter."

"Master Jack, you ask for too many professions. I have told you already to-day, and I don't mean to repeat it for a week, that you are not odious to me."

"But will you not remember, Julia, the long months of banishment I have suffered? Will you not bear in mind that I have lived longingly for this moment; it is cruel now to dash it with a doubt."

"But it is exactly what I am not doing! I have given you fully as much encouragement as is good for you. I have owned — and it is a rash confession for a girl to make at any time — that I care for you more than any part of our prospects for the future could warrant, and if I go one step further there will be nothing for it but for you to buy a bragotza and turn fisherman, and for me to get a basket and sell pilchards in the piazza."

"You needn't taunt me with my poverty; I feel it bitterly enough already. Nor have you any right to think me unable to win a living."

"There, again, you wrong me. I only said, Do not, in your impatience to reach your goal, make it not worth the winning. Don't forget what I told you about long engagements. A man's share of them is the worst."

"But you love me, Julia?" said he, drawing her close to him.

"How tiresome you are!" said she, trying to free herself from his arm.

"Let me once — only once — hear you say this, and I swear to you, Julia, I'll never tease you more."

"Well, then, if I must —"

More was not spoken, for the lips were pressed by a rapturous kiss, as he clasped her to his heart, muttering, "My own, my own!"

"I declare there is Nelly," cried Julia, wrestling herself from his embrace, and starting off; not, however, towards Ellen, but in the direction of the house.

"Oh, Nelly," said Jack, rushing towards his sister, "she loves me — she has said so — she is all my own."

"Of course she is, Jack. I never doubted it, though I own I scarcely thought she'd have told it."

And the brother and sister walked along hand in hand without speaking, a closer pressure of the fingers at intervals alone revealing how they followed the same thoughts and lived in the same joys.

CHAPTER LXII.

DEALING WITH CUTBILL.

"WHAT'S to be done with Cutbill?—will any one tell me this?" was the anxious question Augustus asked as he stood in a group composed of Jack, Nelly, and the L'Estranges. "As to Sedley meeting him at all, I know that is out of the question; but the mere fact of finding the man here will so discredit us in Sedley's eyes that it is more than likely he will pitch up the whole case and say good-bye to us for ever."

"But can he do that?" asked Julia. "Can he, I mean, permit a matter of temper or personal feeling to interfere in a dry affair of duty?"

"Of course he can; where his counsels are disregarded and even counteracted he need not continue his guidance. He is a hot-tempered man besides, and has more than once shown me that he will not bear provocation beyond certain limits."

"I think," began L'Estrange, "if I were in *your* place, I'd tell Cutbill. I'd explain to him how matters stood; and —"

"No, no," broke in Jack; "that won't do at all. The poor dog is too hard up for that."

"Jack is right," said Nelly, warmly.

"Of course he is, so far as Mr. Cutbill goes," broke in Julia; "but we want to do right to every one. Now, how about your brother and his suit?"

"What if I were to show him this letter," said Augustus, "to let him see that Sedley means to be here to-morrow, to remain at farthest three days; is it not likely Cutbill would himself desire to avoid meeting him?"

"Not a bit of it," cried Jack. "It's the thing of all others he'd glory in; he'd be full of all the lively impertinences that he could play off on the lawyer; and he'd write a comic song on him, — ~~ay~~, and sing it in his own presence."

"Nothing more likely," said Julia, gravely.

"Then what is to be done? Is there no escape out of the difficulty?" asked Augustus.

"Yes," said Nelly, "I think there is. The way I should advise would be this: I'd show Mr. Cutbill Sedley's letter, and taking him into counsel, as it were, on the embarrassment of his own position, I'd say, 'We

must hide you somewhere for these three days.'"

"But he wouldn't see it, Nelly. He'd laugh at your delicate scruples. He'd say, 'That's the one man in all Europe I'm dying to meet.'"

"Nelly is quite right, notwithstanding," said Julia. "There is more than one side to Mr. Cutbill's nature. He'd like to be thought a very punctilious gentleman fully as much as a very jocose companion. Make him believe that in keeping out of sight here at this moment he will be exercising a most refined delicacy, — doing what nothing short of a high-bred sensibility would ever have dreamed of, and you'll see he'll be as delighted with his part as ever he was with his coarse drollery. And here he comes to test my theory about him."

As she spoke Cutbill came lounging up the garden walk, too busily engaged in making a paper cigarette to see those in front of him.

"I'm sure, Mr. Cutbill, that cigarette must be intended for me," cried Julia, "seeing all the pains you are bestowing on its manufacture."

"Ah, Miss Julia, if I could only believe that you'd let me corrupt your morals to the extent of a pinch of Latakia —"

"Give me Sedley's letter, Gusty," said Nelly, "and leave the whole arrangement to me. Mr. Cutbill, will you kindly let me have three minutes of your company? I want a bit of advice from you." And she took his arm as she spoke and led him down the garden. She wasted no time in preliminaries, but at once came to the point, saying "We're in what you would call 'a fix' this morning, Mr. Cutbill: my brother's lawyer, Mr. Sedley, is coming here most unexpectedly. We know that some unpleasant passages have occurred between you and that gentleman, making a meeting between you quite impossible; and in the great difficulty of the moment I have charged myself with the solution of the embarrassment, and now begin to see that without your aid I am powerless. Will you help me; that is, will you advise with or for me?"

"Of course I will; but, first of all, where's the difficulty you speak of? I'd no more mind meeting this man, — sitting next him at dinner, if you like, — than I would an old creditor — and I have a good many of them — that I never mean to pay."

"We never doubted *your* tact, Mr. Cutbill," said she, with a strong emphasis on the pronoun.

"If so, then the matter is easy enough.

Tact always serves for two. If *I* be the man you take me for, that crabbed old fellow will love me like a brother before the first day is over."

"That's not the question, Mr. Cutbill. Your personal powers of captivity no one disputes, if only they get a fair field for their exercise; but what we fear is that Mr. Sedley, being the hot-tempered, hasty man he is, will not give you this chance. My brother has twice already been on the verge of a rupture with him for having acted on his own independent judgment. I believe nothing but his regard for poor dear papa would have made him forgive Augustus; and when I tell you that in the present critical state of our cause his desertion of us would be fatal, I am sure you will do anything to avert such a calamity."

"Let us meet, Miss Ellen; let us dine together once—I only ask once—and if I don't borrow money from him before he takes his bedroom candle, you may scratch Tom Cutbill, and put him off the 'course' for ever. What does that impatient shrug of the shoulders mean? Is it as much as to say, 'What a conceited snob it is!' eh?"

"Oh, Mr. Cutbill, you couldn't possibly—"

"Couldn't I though? And don't I know well that I am just as vain of my little talents,—as your friend, Miss Julia, called them,—as you and others are ready to ridicule them; but the real difference between us after all is this: *You* think the world at large is a monstrous clever creature, with great acuteness, great discrimination and great delicacy; and I *know* it to be a great overgrown bully, mistaking half it hears, and blundering all it says, so that any one, I don't care who he is, that will stand out from the crowd in life, think his own thoughts and guide his own actions, may just do what he pleases with that unwieldy old monster, making it believe it's the master, all the while it is a mere slave and a drudge. There's another shrug of the shoulders. Why not say it out—'you're a puppy, Tom Cutbill'?"

"First of all it wouldn't be polite, and secondly—"

"Never mind the secondly. It's quite enough for me to see that I have not convinced you, nor am I half as clever a fellow as I think myself; and do you know, you're the first I ever knew dispute the position."

"But I do not. I subscribe to it implicitly; my presence here, at this moment, attests how I believe it. It is exactly because I regard Mr. Cutbill as the cleverest person I know—the very ablest one to ex-

tricate one from a difficulty—that I have come to him this morning."

"My honour is satisfied!" said he, laying his hand on his heart, and bowing with a grand seriousness.

"And now," said Nelly, hurriedly, for her patience had well nigh given in, "what's to be done? I have a project of my own, but I don't know whether you would agree to it."

"Not agree to a project of yours? What do you take me for, Miss Ellen?"

"My dear Mr. Cutbill, I have exhausted all my compliments. I can only say I endorse all the preceding with compound interest."

Slightly piqued by the half sarcasm of her manner, he simply said—"And your project; what is it?"

"That you should be a close prisoner for the short time Mr. Sedley stays here; sufficiently near to be able to communicate and advise with you—for we count much on your counsel—and yet totally safe from even the chance of meeting him. There is a small chapel about a mile off, where the family confessor used to live, in two neat little rooms adjoining the building. These shall be made comfortable for you. We will take care—I will—that you are not starved; and some of us will be sure to go and see you every day, and report all that goes on. I foresee a number of details, but I have no time now to discuss them; the great point is, do you agree?"

"This is Miss Julia's scheme, is it not?"

"No, I assure you; on my word it is mine."

"But you have concerted it with her?"

"Not even that; she knows nothing of it."

"With whom, then, have you talked it over?"

"With none save Mr. Cutbill."

"In that case, Mr. Cutbill complies," said he, with a theatrical air of condescension.

"You will go there?"

"Yes, I promise it."

"And remain close prisoner till I liberate you?"

"Everything you command."

"I thank you much, and I am very proud of my success," said she, offering her hand. "Shall I own to you," said she, after a pause, "that my brother's nerves have been so shaken by the agitation he has passed through, and by the continual pressure of thinking that it is his own personal fault that this battle has been so ill contested, that the faintest show of censure on him

now would be more than he could bear. I have little doubt that the cause is lost, and I am only eager that poor Augustus should not feel it was lost through *him*."

She was greatly agitated as she spoke, and, with a hurried farewell, she turned and left him.

CHAPTER LXIII.

THE CLIENT AND HIS LAWYER.

WHEN the rest of the party had left the dinner-room, and Augustus Bramleigh and Mr. Sedley found themselves alone, a silence of several minutes ensued; a very solemn pause each felt it, well knowing that at such a moment the slightest word may be the signal for disclosures which involve a destiny. Up to this, nothing had been said on either side of "the cause;" and though Sedley had travelled across Europe to speak of it, he waited with decorous reserve till his host should invite him to the topic.

Bramleigh, an awkward and timid man at the best of times, was still more so when he found himself in a situation in which he should give the initiative. As the entertainer of a guest, too, he fancied that to introduce his personal interests as matter of conversation would be in bad taste, and so he fidgeted, and passed the decanters across the table with a nervous impatience, trying to seem at his ease, and stammering out at last some unmeaning question about the other's journey.

Sedley replied to the inquiry with a cold and measured politeness, as a man might to a matter purely irrelevant.

"The Continent is comparatively new ground to you, Mr. Sedley?"

"Entirely so. I have never been beyond Brussels before this."

"Late years have nearly effaced national peculiarities. One crosses frontiers now, and never remembers a change of country."

"Quite so."

"The money, the coinage, perhaps, is the great reminder after all."

"Money is the great reminder of almost everything everywhere, sir," said Sedley, with a stern and decisive tone.

"I am afraid you are right," said Bramleigh, with a faint sigh, and now they seemed to stand on the brink of a precipice, and look over.

"What news have you for me?" said he at last, gulping as he spoke.

"None to cheer, nothing to give encouragement. The discovery at Castello will ensure them a verdict. We cannot dispute the marriage, it was solemnized in all form

and duly witnessed. The birth of the child was also carefully authenticated—there isn't a flaw in the registry, and they'll take care to remind us on the second trial of how freely we scattered our contemptuous sarcasms on the illegitimacy of this connexion on the first record."

"Is the case hopeless then?"

"Nothing is hopeless where a jury enters, but it is only short of hopeless. Kelson of course says he is sure, and perhaps so should I, in his place. Still they might disagree again: there's a strong repugnance felt by juries against dispossessing an old occupant. All can feel the hardship of his case, and the sympathy for him goes a great way."

"Still this would only serve to protract matters,—they'd bring another action."

"Of course they would, and Kelson has money!"

"I declare I see no benefit in continuing a hopeless contest."

"Don't be hopeless then, that's the remedy."

Bramleigh made a slight gesture of impatience, and slight as it was, Sedley observed it.

"You have never treated this case as your father would have done, Mr. Bramleigh. He had a rare spirit to face a contest. I remember one day hinting to him that if this claim could be backed by money it would be a very formidable suit, and his answer was:—'When I strike my flag, Sedley, the enemy will find the prize was scarcely worth fighting for.' I knew what he meant was, he'd have mortgaged the estate to every shilling of its value, before there arose a question of his title."

"I don't believe it, sir; I tell you to your face I don't believe it," cried Bramleigh, passionately. "My father was a man of honour, and never would have descended to such duplicity."

"My dear sir, I have not come twelve hundred miles to discuss a question in ethics, nor will I risk myself in a discussion with you. I repeat, sir, that had your father lived to meet this contention, we should not have found ourselves where we are to-day. Your father was a man of considerable capacity, Mr. Bramleigh. He conducted a large and important house with consummate skill; brought up his family handsomely; and had he been spared, would have seen every one of them in positions of honour and consequence."

"To every word in his praise I subscribe heartily and gratefully;" and there was a tremor in his voice as Bramleigh spoke.

"He has been spared a sad spectacle, I

must say," continued Sedley. "With the exception of your sister who married that viscount, ruin—there's only one word for it—ruin has fallen upon you all."

"Will you forgive me if I remind you that you are my lawyer, Mr. Sedley, not my chaplain, nor my confessor."

"Lawyer without a suit! Why, my dear sir, there will be soon nothing to litigate. You and all belonging to you were an imposition and a fraud. There, there! It's nothing to grow angry over; how could you or any of you suspect your father's legitimacy? You accepted the situation as you found it, as all of us do. That you regarded Pracontal as a cheat was no fault of yours,—he says so himself. I have seen him and talked with him; he was at Kelson's when I called last week, and old Kelson said,—'My client is in the next room: he says you treated him rudely one day he went to your office. I wish you'd step in and say a civil word or two. It would do good, Sedley. I tell you, it would do good!' and he laid such a significant stress on the word, that I walked straight in and said how very sorry I felt for having expressed myself in a way that could offend him. 'At all events, sir,' said I, 'if you will not accept my apology for myself, let me beseech you to separate the interest of my client from my rudeness, and let not Mr. Bramleigh be prejudiced because his lawyer was ill-mannered.' 'It's all forgotten, never to be recalled,' said he, shaking my hand. 'Has Kelson told you my intentions towards Bramleigh?'"

"He has told me nothing," said I.

"Tell him, Kelson. I can't make the matter plain as you can. Tell Mr. Sedley what we were thinking of."

"In one word, sir, his plan was a partition of the property. He would neither disturb your title, nor dispute your name. You should be the Bramleighs of Castello, merely paying him a rent charge of four thousand a year. Kelson suggested more, but he said a hundred thousand francs was ample, and he made no scruple of adding that he was never master of so many sous in his life."

"And what does Kelson say to this?" asked I.

"Kelson says what Sedley would say—that it is a piece of Quixotism worthy of Hanwell."

"Ma foi," said Pracontal, "it is not the first time I have fired in the air."

"We talked for two hours over the matter. Part of what Pracontal said was good sound sense, well reasoned and acutely expressed; part was sentimental rubbish, not

fit to listen to. At last I obtained leave to submit the whole affair to you, not by letter—that they wouldn't have—but personally, and there, in one word, is the reason of my journey."

"Before I left town, however, I saw the Attorney-General, whose opinion I had already taken on certain points of the case. He was a personal friend of your father, and willingly entered upon it. When I told him Pracontal's proposal he smiled dubiously, and said, 'Why, it's a confession of defeat; the man must know his case will break down, or he never would offer such conditions.'"

"I tried to persuade him that without knowing, seeing, hearing this Frenchman, it would not be easy to imagine such an action proceeding from a sane man, but that his exalted style of talk and his inflated sentimentality made the thing credible. He wants to belong to a family, to be owned and accepted as some one's relative. The man is dying of the shame of his isolation."

"Let him marry."

"So he means, and I hear to Bramleigh's widow, Lady Augusta."

"He laughed heartily at this, and said, 'It's the only encumbrance on the property.' And now, Mr. Bramleigh, you are to judge, if you can; is this the offer of generosity, or is it the crafty proposal of a beaten adversary? I don't mean to say it is an easy point to decide on, or that a man can hit it off at once. Consult those about you; take into consideration the situation you stand in and all its dangers; bethink you what an adverse verdict may bring if we push them to a trial; and even if the proposal be, as Mr. Attorney thinks, the cry of weakness, is it wise to disregard it?"

"Would you have laid such a proposal before my father, Sedley?" said Bramleigh, with a scarcely perceptible smile.

"Not for five hundred pounds, sir."

"I thought not."

"Ay, but remember your father would never have landed us where we stand now, Mr. Bramleigh."

Augustus winced under this remark, but said nothing.

"If the case be what you think it, Sedley," said he at last, "this is a noble offer."

"So say I."

"There is much to think over in it. If I stood alone here, and if my own were the only interests involved, I think—that is I hope—I know what answer I should give; but there are others. You have seen my sister; you thought she looked thin and delicate—and she may well do so, her cares overtax her strength; and my poor brother

too, that fine-hearted fellow, what is to become of *him*? And yet, Sedley," cried he suddenly, "if either of them were to suspect that this — this — what shall I call it? — this arrangement — stood on no basis of right, but was simply an act of generous forbearance, I'd stake my life on it, they'd refuse it."

"You must not consult *them* then, that's clear."

"But I will not decide till I do so."

"Oh, for five minutes — only five minutes — of your poor father's strong sense and sound intellect, and I might send off my telegram to-night." And with this speech, delivered slowly and determinately, the old man arose, took his bed-room candle, and walked away.

CHAPTER LXIV.

A FIRST GLEAM OF LIGHT.

AFTER a sleepless, anxious night, in which he canvassed all that Sedley had told him, Bramleigh presented himself at Jack's bedside as the day was breaking. Though the sailor was not worldly-wise, nor endowed with much knowledge of life, he had, as Augustus knew, a rough and ready judgment which, allied to a spirit of high honour, rarely failed in detecting that course which in the long run proved best. Jack, too, was no casuist, no hair-splitter: he took wide, commonplace views, and in this way was sure to do what nine out of ten ordinary men would approve of, and this was the sort of counsel that Bramleigh now desired to set side by side with his own deeply considered opinion.

Jack listened attentively to his brother's explanation, not once interrupting him by a word or a question till he had finished, and then, laying his hand gently on the other's, said, "You know well, Gusty, that you couldn't do this."

"I thought you would say so, Jack."

"You'd be a fool to part with what you owned, or a knave to sell what did not belong to you."

"My own judgment precisely."

"I'd not bother myself then with Sedley's pros and cons, nor entertain the question about saving what one could out of the wreck. If you haven't a right to a plank in the ship, you have no right to her because she is on the rocks. Say 'No,' Gusty; say 'No' at once."

"It would be at best a compromise on the life of one man, for Pracontal's son, if he should leave one, could revive the claim."

"Don't let us go so far, Gusty. Let us deal with the case as it stands before us. Say 'No,' and have done with the matter at once."

Augustus leaned his head between his hands and fell into a deep vein of thought.

"You've had your trial of humble fortune now, Gusty," continued Jack, "and I don't see that it has soured you; I see no signs of fretting or irritability about you, old fellow; I'll even say that I never remember you jollier or heartier. Isn't it true, this sort of life has no terror for you?"

"Think of Nelly, Jack."

"Nelly is better able to brave hard fortune than either of us. She never was spoiled when we were rich, and she had no pretensions to lay down when we became poor."

"And yourself, my poor fellow? I've had many a plan of what I meant by you."

"Never waste a thought about me. I'll buy a trabaccolo. They're the handiest coasting craft that ever sailed; and I'll see if the fruit-trade in the Levant won't feed me, and we'll live here, Gusty, all together. Come now, tell me frankly, would you exchange that for Castello, if you had to go back there and live alone — eh?"

"I'll not say I would; but —"

"There's no 'but'; the thing is clear and plain enough. This place wouldn't suit Marion or Temple; but they'll not try it. Take my word for it, of all our fine acquaintances, not one will ever come down here to see how we bear our reduced lot in life. We'll start fresh in the race, and we'll talk of long ago and our grand times without a touch of repining."

"I'm quite ready to try it, Jack."

"That's well said," said he, grasping his hand, and pressing it affectionately. "And you'll say 'No' to this offer? I knew you would. Not but the Frenchman is a fine fellow, Gusty. I didn't believe it was in his nation to behave as nobly; for, mark you, I have no doubts, no misgivings about his motives. I'd say all was honest and above board in his offer."

"I join you in that opinion, Jack; and one of these days I hope to tell him so."

"That's the way to fight the battle of life," cried the sailor, enthusiastically. "Stand by your guns manfully, and, if you're beaten, haul down your flag in all honour to the fellow who has been able to thrash you. The more you respect *him*, the higher you esteem yourself. Get rid of that old lawyer as soon as you can, Gusty; he's not a pleasant fellow, and we all want Cutty back again."

"Sedley will only be too glad to escape; he's not in love with our barbarism."

"I'm to breakfast with Cutty this morning. I was nigh forgetting it. I hope I may tell him that his term of banishment is nearly over."

"I imagine Sedley will not remain beyond to-morrow."

"That will be grand news for Cutty, for he can't bear solitude. He says himself he'd rather be in the Marshalsea with plenty of companions, than be a king and have no associates. By the way, am I at liberty to tell him about this offer of Pracontal's? He knows the whole history, and the man too."

"Tell him if you like. The Frenchman is a favourite with him, and this will be another reason for thinking well of him."

"That's the way to live, Gusty. Keep the ship's company in good humour, and the voyage will be all the happier."

After a few words they parted, Augustus to prepare a formal reply to his lawyer, and Jack to keep his engagement with Cutbill. Though it was something of a long walk, Jack never felt it so; his mind was full of pleasant thoughts of the future. To feel that Julia loved him, and to know that a life of personal effort and enterprise was before him, were thoughts of overwhelming delight. He was now to show himself worthy of her love, and he would do this. With what resolution he would address himself to the stern work of life! It was not enough to say affluence had not spoiled him, he ought to be able to prove that the gentleman element was a source of energy and perseverance which no reverses could discourage. Julia was a girl to value this. She herself had learned how to meet a fallen condition, and had sacrificed nothing that graced or adorned her nature in the struggle. Nay, she was more loveable now than he had ever known her. Was it not downright luck that had taught them both to bear an altered lot before the trial of their married life began? It was thus he reasoned as he went, canvassing his condition in every way, and contented with it in all.

"What good news have you got this morning?" cried Cutbill as he entered. "I never saw you look so jolly in my life."

"Well, I did find half-a-crown in the pocket of an old letter-case this morning; but it's the only piece of unexpected luck that has befallen me."

"Is the lawyer gone?"

"No."

"Nor thinking of going?"

"I won't say that. I suspect he won't

make a long halt after he has a talk with Gusty to-day."

And now Jack told in few words the object of Sedley's coming, what Pracontal had offered, and what Augustus had resolved to send for answer.

"I'd have said the Frenchman was the biggest fool in Europe if I hadn't heard of your brother," said Cutbill, puffing out a long column of smoke, and giving a deep sigh.

"That's not exactly how I read each of them," said Jack, sternly.

"Possibly; but it's the true rendering after all. Consider for one moment —"

"Not for half a moment, Master Cutbill. That my brother might make a very good bargain, by simply bartering such an insignificant thing as his honour as a gentleman, is easy to see; and that scores of people wouldn't understand that such a compromise was in question, or was of much consequence, even if it were, is also easy to see; and we need waste no time in discussing this. I say Gusty's right, and I maintain it; and if you like to hold a different opinion, do so in heaven's name, but don't disparage motives simply because you can't feel them."

"Are you better after all that?" said Cutbill, drily, as he filled Jack's glass with water, and pushed it towards him. "Do you feel refreshed?"

"Much better — considerably relieved."

"Could I offer you anything cooling or calming?"

"Nothing half as cool as yourself, Cutty. And now let's change the subject, for it's one I'll not stand any chaff about."

"Am I safe in recommending you that grilled chicken, or is it indiscreet in me to say you'll find those sardines good?"

Jack helped himself, and ate on without a word. At last, he lifted his head, and, looking around him, said, "You've very nice quarters here, Cutbill."

"As neat as paint. I was thinking this morning whether I'd not ask your brother to rent me this little place. I feel quite romantic since I've come up here, with the nightingales, and the cicadas, and the rest of them."

"If there were only a few more rooms like this, I'd dispute the tenancy with you."

"There's a sea-view for you," said he, throwing wide the jalousies. "The whole Bocca di Cattaro and the islands in the distance. Naples is nothing to it! And when you have feasted your eye with worldly beauty, and want a touch of celestial beatitude, you've only to do this." And he

arose, and walking over to one side of the room, drew back a small curtain of green silk, disclosing behind it an ornamental screen or "grille" of iron-work.

"What does that mean?" asked Jack.

"That means that the occupant of this room, when devoutly disposed, could be able to hear mass without the trouble of going for it. This little grating here looks into the chapel; and there are evidences about that members of the family who lived at the villa were accustomed to come up here at times to pass days of solitude, and perhaps penance, which, after all, judging from the indulgent character of this little provision here, were probably not over severe."

"Nelly has told me of this chapel. Can we see it?"

"No; it's locked and barred like a gaol. I've tried to peep in through this grating; but it's too dark to see anything."

"But this grating is on a hinge," said Jack. "Don't you see, it was meant to open, though it appears not to have done so for some years back? Here's the secret of it." And pressing a small knob in the wall, the framework became at once movable, and opened like a window.

"I hope it's not sacrilege, but I mean to go in," said Jack, who, mounting on a chair, with a sailor's agility insinuated himself through the aperture, and invited Cutbill to follow.

"No, no; I wasn't brought up a rope-dancer," said he, gruffly. "If you can't manage to open the door for me —"

"But it's what I can. I can push back every bolt. Come round now, and I'll admit you."

By the time Cutbill had reached the entrance, Jack had succeeded in opening the massive doors; and as he flung them wide, a flood of light poured into the little crypt, with its splendid altar and its silver lamps; its floor of tessellated marble, and its ceiling a mass of gilded tracery almost too bright to look on: but it was not at the glittering splendour of gold or gems that they now stood enraptured. It was in speechless wonderment of the picture that formed the altar-piece, which was a Madonna — a perfect copy, in every lineament and line, of the *Flora* at Castello. Save that an expression of ecstatic rapture had replaced the look of joyous delight, they were the same, and unquestionably were derived from the same original.

"Do you know that?" cried Cutbill.

"Know it! Why, it's our own fresco at Castello."

"And by the same hand, too," cried Cut-

bill. "Here are the initials in the corner — G. L.! Of all the strange things that I have ever met in this life, this is the strangest!" And he leaned on the railing of the altar, and gazed on the picture with intense interest.

"I can make nothing of it," muttered Jack.

"And yet there's a great story in it," said Cutbill, in a low, serious tone. "That picture was a portrait — a portrait of the painter's daughter; and that painter's daughter was the wife of your grandfather, Montague Bramleigh; and it is her grandchild now, the man called Pracontal, who claims your estates."

"How do you pretend to know all this?"

"I know it chapter and verse. I have gone over the whole history with that old painter's journal before me. I have seen several studies of that girl's face, — 'Enrichetta Lami,' she was called, — and I have read the entry of her marriage with your grandfather in the parish register. A terrible fact for your poor brother, for it clenches his ruin. Was there ever as singular a chance in life as the re-appearance of this face here?"

"Coming as though to taunt us with our downfall; though certainly that lovely brow and those tearful eyes have no scorn in them. She must have been a great beauty."

"Pracontal raves of her beauty, and says that none of these pictures do her justice, except one at Urbino. At least he gathers this from the journal, which he swears by as if it were gospel."

"I'd call her handsomer in that picture than in our fresco. I wonder if this were painted earlier or later."

"I can answer that question; for the old sacristan who came up here yesterday, and fell to talking about the chapel, mentioned how the painter — a gran' maestro, he called him — bargained to be buried at the foot of the altar, and the Marchese had not kept his word, not liking to break up the marble pavement, and had him interred outside the walls, with the prior's grave and a monk at either side of him. His brushes and colours, and his tools for fresco-work, were all buried in the chapel, for they had been blessed by the Pope's Nuncio, after the completion of the basilica at Udine. Haven't I remembered my story well, and the old fellow didn't tell it above nine times over? This was old Lami's last work, and here his last resting-place."

"What is it seems so familiar to me in that name? Every time you have uttered it I am ready to say I have heard of it before."

"What so likely, from Augustus or your sister."

"No. I can answer for it that neither of them ever spoke of him to me. I know it was not from *them* I heard it."

"But how tell the story of this suit without naming him?"

"They never did tell me the story of the suit, beyond the fact that my grandfather had been married privately in early life, and left a son whom he had not seen nor recognized, but took every means to disavow and disown. Wait now, a moment; my mind is coming to it. I think I have the clue to this old fellow's name. I must go back to the villa, however, to be certain."

"Not a word of our discovery here to any one," cried Cutbill. "We must arrange to bring them all here, and let them be surprised as we were."

"I'll be back with you within an hour," said Jack. "My head is full of this, and I'll tell you why when I return."

And they parted.

Before Cutbill could believe it possible, Jack, flushed and heated, re-entered the room. He had run at top speed, found what he sought for, and came back in intense eagerness to declare the result.

"You've lost no time, Jack; nor have I either. I took up the flags under the altars, and came upon this oak box. I suppose it was sacrilege, but I carried it off here to examine at our leisure."

"Look here," cried Jack, "look at this scrap of paper. It was given to me at the galleys at Ischia by the fellow I was chained to. Read these names, Giacomo Lami—whose daughter was Enrichetta—I was to trace him out, and communicate, if I could, with this other man, Tonino Baldassare or Pracontal—he was called by both names. Bolton of Naples could trace him."

A long low whistle was Cutbill's only reply as he took the paper, and studied it long and attentively.

"Why, this is the whole story," cried he at last. "This old galley-slave is the real claimant, and Pracontal has no right, while Niccolo, or whatever his name may be, lives. This may turn out glorious news for your brother, but I'm not lawyer enough to say whether it may not be the Crown that will benefit, if his estates be confiscated for felony."

"I don't think that this was the sort of service Old Nick asked me to render him when we parted," said Jack, drily.

"Probably not. He only asked you to help his son to take away your brother's estate."

"Old Nick knew nothing about whose

brother I was. He trusted me to do him a service, and I told him I would."

Though Cutbill paid but little attention to him, Jack talked on for some time of his old comrade, recounting the strange traits of his nature, and remembering with gratitude such little kindness as it was in his power to show.

"I'd have gone clean out of my mind but for him," said he at last.

"And we have all believed that this fellow was lost at sea," muttered Cutbill. "Bolton gave up all his papers and the remnant of his property to his son in that belief."

"Nor does he wish to be thought living now. He charged me to give no clue to him. He even said I was to speak of him as one I had met at Monte Video years ago."

"These are things for a 'cutter head than yours or mine, Jack," said Cutbill, with a cunning look. "We're not the men to see our way through this tangle. Go and show that scrap of paper to Sedley, and take this box with you. Tell him how you came by each. That old fox will soon see whether they confirm the case against your brother or disclose a flaw in it."

"And is that the way I'm to keep my word to Old Nick?" said Jack, doggedly.

"I don't suppose you ever bound yourself to injure your own flesh and blood by a blank promise. I don't believe there's a family in Europe with as many scruples, and as little sense how to deal with them."

"Civil that, certainly."

"Not a bit civil, only true; but let us not squabble. Go and tell Sedley what we have chanced upon. These men have a way of looking at the commonest events—and this is no common event—that you nor I have never dreamed of. If Pracontal's father be alive, Pracontal cannot be the claimant to your estates; that much, I take it, is certain. At all events Sedley's the man to answer this."

Half pushing Jack out of the room while he deposited the box in his hands, Cutbill at last sent him off, not very willingly indeed, or concurringly, but like one who, in spite of himself, saw he was obliged to take a particular course, and travel a road without the slightest suspicion of where it led to.

CHAPTER LXV.

THE LIGHT STRONGER.

"SEDLEY asks for the best Italian scholar amongst us," said Augustus the next

morning at breakfast, "and the voice of public opinion calls upon you, Julia."

"You know what Figaro said of 'common report.' I'll not repeat it," said she, laughing, "and I'll even behave as if I didn't believe it. And now what is wanted of me, or my Italian scholarship?"

"The matter is thus: Sedley has received some papers"—here a look of intelligence passed between Augustus and Jack—"which he imagines may be of consequence, but being in Italian, he can't read them. He needs a translator——"

"I am equal to that," broke she in, "but why don't we do it in committee, as you political people call it? Five heads are better than one."

"Mr. Sedley is absolute, and will have but one."

"And am I to be closeted for a whole morning with Mr. Sedley? I declare it seems compromising. Jack frowns at me. There is nothing so prudish as a sailor. I wish any one would tell me why it is so."

"Well, the matter is as you have stated it," said Augustus. "Mr. Sedley says, 'Let me have the aid of some one who will not grudge me two hours, mayhap three.'"

"What if the documents should turn out love-letters?"

"Julia! Julia!" cried Jack reprovingly, for in reality her sallies kept him in constant anxiety.

"I can't help it, Jack; I must be prudent, even if I shock you by my precautions. I repeat, if these be love-letters?"

"Well, I can answer so far," said Augustus. "They are not—at least I can almost assert they are not."

"I wish Nelly would go," said Julia, with mock seriousness. "I see Jack is wretched about it, and after all Mr. Sedley, though not exactly a young man,——"

"I declare this is too bad," said Jack, rising angrily from table, and then throwing himself back in his chair, as if in conflict with his own temper.

"She is provoking, there is no doubt of it, and on board ship we'd not stand that sort of thing five minutes," said Julia, with a demure air, "but on land, and amongst terrestrial creatures, Master Jack, I know nothing for it but patience."

"Patience!" muttered he, with an expression that made them all burst out laughing.

"So I may tell Sedley you will aid him?" asked Bramleigh.

"I'm ready now. Indeed, the sooner begun the better, for we have a long walk project—haven't we, Jack?—for this afternoon."

"Yes, if we have patience for it," said he. And once more the laugh broke forth as they arose from table and separated into little knots and groups through the room.

"I may tell you, Julia," said Augustus, in a half whisper, "that though I have given up hoping this many a day, it is just possible there may be something in these papers of moment to me, and I know I have only to say as much to secure your interest in them."

"I believe you can rely upon that," said she; and within less than five minutes afterwards she was seated at the table with Mr. Sedley in the study, an oblong box of oak clasped with brass in front of them, and a variety of papers lying scattered about.

"Have you got good eyes, Miss L'Es-trange?" said Sedley, as he raised his spectacles, and turned a peering glance towards her.

"Good eyes?" repeated she, in some astonishment.

"Yes; I don't mean pretty eyes, or expressive eyes. I mean, have you keen sight?"

"I think I have."

"That's what I need from you at this moment; here are some papers with erasures and re-writings, and corrections in many places, and it will take all your acuteness to distinguish between the several contexts. Aided by a little knowledge of Latin, I have myself discovered some passages of considerable interest. I was half the night over them; but with your help, I count on accomplishing more in half an hour."

While he spoke, he continued to arrange papers in little packets before him, and, last of all, took from the box a painter's pallet and several brushes, along with two or three of those quaintly shaped knives men use in fresco-painting.

"Have you ever heard of the painter Giacomo Lami?" asked he.

"Of course I have. I know the whole story in which he figures. Mr. Bramleigh has told it to me."

"These are his tools. With these he accomplished those great works which have made him famous among modern artists, and by his will—at least I have spelled out so much—they were buried along with him."

"And where was he buried?"

"Here! here in Cattaro; his last work was the altar-piece of the little chapel of the villa."

"Was there ever so strange a coincidence!"

"The world is full of them, for it is a

very small world; after all. This old man, driven from place to place by police persecutions—for he had been a great conspirator in early life, and never got rid of the taste for it—came here as a sort of refuge, and painted the frescoes of the chapel at the price of being buried at the foot of the altar, which was denied him afterwards; for they only buried there this box, with his painting utensils and his few papers. It is to these papers I wish now to direct your attention, if good luck will have it that some of them may be of use. As for me, I can do little more than guess at the contents of most of them."

"Now these," continued he, "seem to me bills and accounts; are they such?"

"Yes, these are notes of expenses incurred in travelling; and he would seem to have been always on the road. Here is a curious note: 'Nuremberg: I like this old town much; its staid propriety and quietness suit me. I feel that I could work here; work at something greater and better than these daily efforts for mere bread; but why after all should I do more? I have none now to live for—none to work for! Enrichetta, and her boy, gone! and Carlotta —'"

"Wait a moment," said the lawyer, laying his hand on hers. "Enrichetta was the wife of Montagu Bramleigh, and this boy their son."

"Yes, and subsequently the father of Pracontal."

"And how so, if he died in boyhood?" muttered he; "read on."

"Now, Carlotta has deserted me! and for whom? For the man who betrayed me! for that Niccolo Baldassare who denounced five of us at Verona, and whose fault it is not that I have not died by the hangman."

"This is very important; a light is breaking on me through this cloud, too, that gives me hope."

"I see what you mean. You think that probably —"

"No matter what I think. Search on through the papers: what is this? here is a drawing. Is it a mausoleum?"

"Yes; and the memorandum says: 'If I ever be rich enough, I shall place this over Enrichetta's remains at Louvain, and have her boy's body laid beside her. Poor child, that, if spared, might have inherited a princely state and fortune, he lies now in the pauper burial-ground at St. Michel. They let me, in consideration of what I had done in repairing their frescoes, place a wooden cross over him. I cut the inscription with my own hands — G. L. B., aged

four years; the last hope of a shattered heart.'"

"Does not this strengthen your impression?" asked Julia, turning and confronting him.

"Aged four years; he was born, I think, in '99—the year after the rebellion in Ireland; this brings us nigh the date of his death. One moment. Let me note this." He hurriedly scratched off a few lines. "St. Michel; where is St. Michel? It may be a church in some town."

"Or it may be that village in Savoy, at the foot of the Alps."

"True! We shall try there."

"These are without interest; they are notes of sums paid on the road, or received for his labour. All were evidently leaves of a book, and torn out."

"What is this about Carlotta here?"

"Ah, yes. 'With this I send her all I had saved and put by. I knew he would ill-treat her; but to take her boy from her,—her one joy and comfort in life,—and to send him away she knows not whither, his very name changed, is more than I believed possible. She says that Niccolo has been to England, and found means to obtain money from M. B.'"

"Montagu Bramleigh," muttered Sedley; but she read on:—"This is too base; but it explains why he stole all the letters in poor Enrichetta's box, and the papers that told of her marriage."

"Are we on the right track now?" cried the old lawyer, triumphantly. "This Baldassare was the father of the claimant, clearly enough. Enrichetta's child died, and the sister's husband substituted himself in his place."

"But this Niccolo who married Carlotta," said Julia, "must have been many years older than Enrichetta's son would have been had he lived."

"Who was to detect that? Don't you see that he never made personal application to the Bramleighs. He only addressed them by letter, which, knowing all Enrichetta's story, he could do without risk or danger. Kelson couldn't have been aware of this," muttered he; "but he had some misgivings—what were they?"

While the lawyer sat in deep thought, his face buried in his hands, Julia hurriedly turned over the papers. There were constant references to Carlotta's boy, whom the old man seemed to have loved tenderly; and different jottings showed how he had kept his birthday, which fell on the 4th of August. He was born at Zurich, where Baldassare worked as a watchmaker, his trade being, however, a mere mask to con-

ceal his real occupation, that of a conspirator.

"No," said Sedley, raising his head at last, "Kelson knew nothing of it. I'm certain he did not. It was a cleverly planned scheme throughout; and all the more so by suffering a whole generation to lapse before litigating the claim."

"But what is this here?" cried Julia, eagerly. "It is only a fragment, but listen to it:— 'There is no longer a doubt about it. Baldassare's first wife—a certain Marie de Pracontal—is alive, and living with her parents at Aix, in Savoy. Four of the committee have denounced him, and his fate is certain."

"I had begun a letter to Bramleigh, to expose the fraud this scoundrel would pass upon him; but why should I spare him who killed my child?"

"First of all," said Sedley, reading from his notes, "we have the place and date of Enrichetta's death; secondly, the burial-place of Godfrey Lami Bramleigh set down as St. Michel, perhaps in Savoy. We have then the fact of the stolen papers, the copies of registries, and other documents. The marriage of Carlotta is not specified, but it is clearly evident, and we can even fix the time; and, last of all, we have this second wife, whose name, Pracontal, was always borne by the present claimant."

"And are you of opinion that this same Pracontal was a party to the fraud?" asked Julia.

"I am not certain," muttered he. "It is not too clear; the point is doubtful."

"But what have we here? It is a letter, with a post-mark on it." She read, "Leghorn, February 8, 1812." It was addressed to the Illustrissimo Maestro Lami, Porta Rossa, Florence, and signed N. Baldassare. It was but a few lines, and ran thus:—

"Seeing that Carlotta and her child now sleep at Pisa, why deny me your interest for my boy Anatole? You know well to what he might succeed, and how. Be unforgiving to me if you will. I have borne as hard things even as your hatred, but the child that has never wronged you deserves no part of this hate. I want but little from you: some dates, a few names—that I know you remember,—and last of all, my mind refreshed on a few events which I have heard you talk of again and again. Nor is it for

me that you will do this, for I leave Europe within a week,—I shall return to it no more. Answer this Yes or No, at once, as I am about to quit this place. You know me well enough to know that I never threaten though I sometimes counsel, and my counsel now is, consent to the demand of—N. BALDASSARE."

Underneath was written in Lami's hand,—"I will carry this to my grave, that I may curse him who wrote it here and hereafter."

"Now the story stands out complete," said Julia, "and this Pracontal belonged to neither Bramleigh nor Lami."

"Make me a literal translation of that letter," said Sedley. "It is of more moment than almost all we have yet read. I do not mean now, Miss Julia," said he, seeing she had already commenced to write; "for we have these fragments still to look over."

While the lawyer occupied himself with drawing up a memorandum for his own guidance, Julia, by his directions, went carefully over the remaining papers: few were of any interest, but these she docketed accurately, and with such brevity and clearness combined, that Sedley, little given to compliments, could not but praise her skill. It was not till the day began to decline that their labours drew to a close. It was a day of intense attention and great work, but only when it was over did she feel the exhaustion of overwrought powers.

"You are very, very tired," said Sedley. "It was too thoughtless of me; I ought to have remembered how unused you must be to fatigue like this."

"But I couldn't have left it; the interest was intense, and nothing would have persuaded me to leave the case without seeing how it ended."

"It will be necessary to authenticate these," said he, laying his hand on the papers, "and then we must show how we came by them."

"Jack can tell you this," said she; and now her strength failed her outright, and she lay back, overcome, and almost fainting. Sedley hurriedly rang for help, but before any one arrived Julia rallied, and with a faint smile said, "Don't make a fuss about me. You have what is really important to occupy you. I will go and lie down till evening;" and so she left him.

From Macmillan's Magazine.

"ON A PIECE OF CHALK."

A LECTURE TO WORKING MEN.*

BY PROFESSOR HUXLEY, F.R.S., ETC., ETC.

If a well were to be sunk at our feet in the midst of the city of Norwich, the diggers would very soon find themselves at work in that white substance, almost too soft to be called rock, with which we are all familiar as "chalk."

Not only here, but over the whole country of Norfolk, the well-sinker might carry his shaft down many hundred feet without coming to the end of the chalk; and, on the sea-coast, where the waves have pared away the face of the land which breasts them, the scarped faces of the high cliffs are often wholly formed of the same material. Northward, the chalk may be followed as far as Yorkshire; on the south coast it appears abruptly in the picturesque western bays of Dorset, and breaks into the Needles of the Isle of Wight; while on the shores of Kent it supplies that long line of white cliffs to which England owes her name of Albion.

Were the thin soil which covers it all washed away, a curved band of white chalk, here broader and there narrower, might be followed diagonally across England from Lulworth in Dorset to Flamborough Head in Yorkshire—a distance of over 280 miles as the crow flies.

From this band to the North Sea on the east and the Channel on the south, the chalk is largely hidden by other deposits; but except in the Weald of Kent and Sussex, it enters into the very foundation of all the south-eastern countries.

Attaining, as it does in some places, a thickness of more than a thousand feet, the English chalk must be admitted to be a mass of considerable magnitude. Nevertheless, it covers but an insignificant portion of the whole area occupied by the chalk formation of the globe which has precisely the same general characters as ours, and is found in detached patches, some less, and others more extensive, than the English.

Chalk occurs in north-west Ireland; it stretches over a large part of France,—the chalk which underlies Paris being, in fact, a continuation of that of the London basin; runs through Denmark and Central Europe, and extends southward to North Africa; while eastward it appears in the Crimea and Syria, and may be traced as far as the shores of the Sea of Aral in Central Asia.

* Delivered during the meeting of the British Association at Norwich.

If all the points at which true chalk occurs were circumscribed, they would lie within an irregular oval about 5,000 miles in long diameter—the area of which would be as great as that of Europe, and would many times exceed that of the largest existing inland sea—the Mediterranean.

Thus the chalk is no unimportant element in the masonry of the earth's crust, and it impresses a peculiar stamp, varying with the conditions to which it is exposed, on the scenery of the districts in which it occurs. The undulating downs and rounded coombs, covered with sweet-grassed turf, of our inland chalk country, have a peacefully domestic and mutton-suggesting prettiness, but can hardly be called either grand or beautiful. But on our southern coasts, the wall-sided cliffs, many hundred feet high, with vast needles and pinnacles standing out in the sea, sharp and solitary enough to serve as perches for the weary cormorant, confer a wonderful beauty and grandeur upon the chalk headlands. And, in the East, chalk has its share in the formation of some of the most venerable of mountain ranges, such as the Lebanon.

What is this wide-spread component of the surface of the earth? and whence did it come?

You may think this no very hopeful inquiry. You may not unnaturally suppose that the attempt to solve such problems as these can lead to no result, save that of entangling the inquirer in vague speculations, incapable alike of refutation and of verification.

If such were really the case, I should have selected some other subject than "a piece of chalk" for my discourse. But, in truth, after much deliberation, I have been unable to think of any topic which would so well enable me to lead you to see how solid is the foundation upon which some of the most startling conclusions of physical science rest.

A great chapter of the history of the world is written in the chalk. Few passages in the history of man can be supported by such an overwhelming mass of direct and indirect evidence as that which testifies to the truth of the fragment of the history of the globe which I hope to enable you to read with your own eyes to-night.

Let me add, that few chapters of human history have a more profound significance for ourselves. I weigh my words well when I assert, that the man who should know the true history of the bit of chalk which every carpenter carries about in his breeches pocket, though ignorant of all

other history, is likely, if he will think his knowledge out to its ultimate results, to have a truer, and therefore a better, conception of this wonderful universe, and of man's relation to it, than the most learned student who is deep-read in the records of humanity and ignorant of those of nature.

The language of the chalk is not hard to learn, not nearly so hard as Latin, if you only want to get at the broad features of the story it has to tell; and I propose that we now set to work to spell that story out together.

We all know that if we "burn" chalk the result is quicklime. Chalk, in fact, is a compound of carbonic acid gas and lime, and when you make it very hot the carbonic acid flies away and the lime is left.

By this method of procedure we see the lime, but we do not see the carbonic acid. If, on the other hand, you were to powder a little chalk, and drop it into a good deal of strong vinegar, there would be a great bubbling and fizzing, and finally a clear liquid in which no sign of chalk would appear. Here you see the carbonic acid in the bubbles; the lime, dissolved in the vinegar, vanishes from sight. There are a great many other ways of showing that chalk is essentially nothing but carbonic acid and quicklime. Chemists enunciate the result of all the experiments which prove this, by stating that chalk is almost wholly composed of "carbonate of lime."

It is desirable for us to start from the knowledge of this fact, though it may not seem to help us very far towards what we seek. For carbonate of lime is a widely-spread substance, and is met with under very various conditions. All sorts of lime-stones are composed of more or less pure carbonate of lime. The crust which is often deposited by waters which have drained through limestone rocks, in the form of what are called stalagmites and stalactites, is carbonate of lime. Or, to take a more familiar example, the fur on the inside of a tea-kettle is carbonate of lime; and, for anything chemistry tells us to the contrary, the chalk might be a kind of gigantic fur upon the bottom of the earth kettle, which is kept pretty hot below.

Let us try another method of making the chalk tell us its own history. To the unassisted eye chalk looks simply like a very loose and open kind of stone. But it is possible to grind a slice of chalk down so thin that you can see through it—until it is thin enough, in fact, to be examined with any magnifying power that may be thought desirable. A thin slice of the fur of a kettle might be made in the same way. If it

were examined microscopically, it would show itself to be a more or less distinctly laminated mineral substance, and nothing more.

But the slice of chalk presents a totally different appearance when placed under the microscope. The general mass of it is made up of very minute granules; but imbedded in this matrix are innumerable bodies, some smaller and some larger, but, on a rough average, not more than a hundredth of an inch in diameter, having a well-defined shape and structure. A cubic inch of some specimens of chalk may contain hundreds of thousands of these bodies, compacted together with incalculable millions of the granules.

The examination of a transparent slice gives a good notion of the manner in which the components of the chalk are arranged, and of their relative proportions. But, by rubbing up some chalk with a brush in water and then pouring off the milky fluid, so as to obtain sediments of different degrees of fineness, the granules and the minute rounded bodies may be pretty well separated from one another, and submitted to microscopic examination, either as opaque or as transparent objects. By combining the views obtained in these various methods, each of the rounded bodies may be proved to be a beautifully-constructed calcareous fabric, made up of a number of chambers, communicating freely with one another. The chambered bodies are of various forms. One of the commonest is something like a badly-grown raspberry, being formed of a number of nearly globular chambers of different sizes congregated together. It is called *Globigerina*, and some specimens of chalk consist of little else than *Globigerina* and granules.

Let us fix our attention upon the *Globigerina*. It is the spoor of the game we are tracking. If we can learn what it is and what are the conditions of its existence, we shall see our way to the origin and past history of the chalk.

A suggestion which may naturally enough present itself is, that these curious bodies are the result of some process of aggregation which has taken place in the carbonate of lime; that, just as in winter the rime on our windows simulates the most delicate and elegantly arborescent foliage—proving that the mere mineral, water, may, under certain conditions, assume the outward form of organic bodies—so this mineral substance, carbonate of lime, hidden away in the bowels of the earth, has taken the shape of these chambered bodies. I am not raising a merely fanciful and unreal objection.

Very learned men, in former days, have even entertained the notion that all the formed things found in rocks are of this nature; and if no such conception is at present held to be admissible, it is because long and varied experience has now shown that mineral matter never does assume the form and structure we find in fossils. If any one were to try to persuade you that an oyster-shell (which is also chiefly composed of carbonate of lime) had crystallized out of sea-water, I suppose you would laugh at the absurdity. Your laughter would be justified by the fact that all experience tends to show that oyster-shells are formed by the agency of oysters, and in no other way. And if there were no better reasons, we should be justified, on like grounds, in believing that *Globigerina* is not the product of anything but vital activity.

Happily, however, better evidence in proof of the organic nature of the *Globigerina* than that of analogy is forthcoming. It so happens that calcareous skeletons, exactly similar to the *Globigerinae* of the chalk, are being formed, at the present moment, by minute living creatures, which flourish in multitudes, literally more numerous than the sands of the sea-shore, over a large extent of that part of the earth's surface which is covered by the ocean.

The history of the discovery of these living *Globigerinae*, and of the part which they play in rock-building, is singular enough. It is a discovery which, like others of no less scientific importance, has arisen, incidentally, out of work devoted to very different and exceedingly practical interests.

When men first took to the sea they speedily learned to look out for shoals and rocks, and the more the burthen of their ships increased, the more imperatively necessary it became for sailors to ascertain with precision the depth of the waters they traversed. Out of this necessity grew the use of the lead and sounding-line; and, ultimately, marine-surveying, which is the recording of the form of coasts and of the depth of the sea, as ascertained by the sounding-lead, upon charts.

At the same time, it became desirable to ascertain and to indicate the nature of the sea-bottom, since this circumstance greatly affects its goodness as holding ground for anchors. Some ingenious tar, whose name deserves a better fate than the oblivion into which it has fallen, attained this object by "arming" the bottom of the lead with a lump of grease, to which more or less of the sand or mud, or broken shells, as the case might be, adhered, and was brought

to the surface. But, however well adapted such an apparatus might be for rough nautical purposes, scientific accuracy could not be expected from the armed lead, and to remedy its defects (especially when applied to sounding in great depths) Lieut. Brooke, of the American Navy, some years ago invented a most ingenious machine, by which a considerable portion of the superficial layer of the sea-bottom can be scooped out and brought up, from any depth to which the lead descends.

In 1853, Lieut. Brooke obtained mud from the bottom of the North Atlantic, between Newfoundland and the Azores, at a depth of more than 10,000 feet, or two miles, by the help of this sounding apparatus. The specimens were sent for examination to Ehrenberg of Berlin, and to Bailey of West Point, and those able microscopists found that this deep-sea mud was almost entirely composed of the skeletons of living organisms—the greater proportion of these being just like the *Globigerinae* already known to occur in the chalk.

Thus far, the work had been carried on simply in the interests of science, but Lieut. Brooke's method of sounding acquired a high commercial value when the enterprise of laying down the telegraph-cable between this country and the United States was undertaken. For it became a matter of immense importance to know, not only the depth of the sea over the whole line along which the cable was to be laid, but the exact nature of the bottom, so as to guard against chances of cutting or fraying the strands of that costly rope. The Admiralty consequently ordered Captain Dayman, an old friend and shipmate of mine, to ascertain the depth over the whole line of the cable, and to bring back specimens of the bottom. In former days, such a command as this might have sounded very much like one of the impossible things which the young prince in the Fairy Tales is ordered to do before he can obtain the hand of the princess. However, in the months of June and July, 1857, my friend performed the task assigned to him with great expedition and precision, without, so far as I know, having met with any reward of that kind. The specimens of Atlantic mud which he procured were sent to me to be examined and reported upon.*

* See Appendix to Captain Dayman's "Deep-Sea Soundings in the North Atlantic Ocean, between Ireland and Newfoundland, made in H. M. S. *Cyclops*. Published by order of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, 1858." They have since formed the subject of an elaborate Memoir by Messrs. Parker and Jones, published in the *Philosophical Transactions* for 1855.

The result of all these operations is that we know the contours and nature of the surface-soil covered by the North Atlantic for a distance of 1,700 miles from east to west, as well as we know that of any part of the dry land.

It is a prodigious plain — one of the widest and most even plains in the world. If the sea were drained off, you might drive a wagon all the way from Valentia, on the west coast of Ireland, to Trinity Bay, in Newfoundland. And, except upon one sharp incline about 200 miles from Valentia, I am not quite sure that it would even be necessary to put the skid on, so gentle are the ascents and descents upon that long route. From Valentia the road would lie down hill about 200 miles to the point at which the bottom is now covered by 1,700 fathoms of sea-water. Then would come the central plain, more than a thousand miles wide, the inequalities of the surface of which would be hardly perceptible, though the depth of water upon it now varies from 10,000 to 15,000 feet; and there are places in which Mont Blanc might be sunk without showing its peak above water. Beyond this, the ascent on the American side commences, and gradually leads, for about 300 miles, to the Newfoundland shore.

Almost the whole of the bottom of this central plain (which extends for many hundred miles in a north and south direction) is covered by a fine mud, which, when brought to the surface, dries into a grayish-white friable substance. You can write with this on a blackboard, if you are so inclined, and to the eye it is quite like very soft, greyish chalk. Examined chemically, it proves to be composed almost wholly of carbonate of lime; and if you make a section of it in the same way as that of the piece of chalk was made, and view it with the microscope, it presents innumerable *Globigerinae*, embedded in a granular matrix.

Thus this deep-sea mud is substantially chalk. I say substantially, because there are a good many minor differences: but as these have no bearing upon the question immediately before us, — which is the nature of the *Globigerinae* of the chalk — it is unnecessary to speak of them.

Globigerinae of every size, from the smallest to the largest, are associated together in the Atlantic mud, and the chambers of many are filled by a soft animal matter. This soft substance is, in fact, the remains of the creature to which the *Globigerina* shell, or rather skeleton, owes its existence — and which is an animal of the

simplest imaginable description. It is, in fact, a mere particle of living jelly, without defined parts of any kind — without a mouth, nerves, muscles, or distinct organs, and only manifesting its vitality to ordinary observation by thrusting out and retracting, from all parts of its surface, long filamentous processes, which serve for arms and legs. Yet this amorphous particle, devoid of everything which in the higher animals we call organs, is capable of feeding, growing, and multiplying; of separating from the ocean the small proportion of carbonate of lime which is dissolved in sea-water; and of building up that substance into a skeleton for itself, according to a pattern which can be imitated by no other known agency.

The notion that animals can live and flourish in the sea at the vast depths from which apparently living *Globigerinae* have been brought up, does not agree very well with our usual conceptions respecting the conditions of animal life; and it is not so absolutely impossible as it might at first sight appear to be, that the *Globigerinae* of the Atlantic sea-bottom do not live and die where they are found.

As I have mentioned, the soundings from the great Atlantic plain are almost entirely made up of *Globigerinae*, with the granules which have been mentioned and some few other calcareous shells; but a small percentage of the chalky mud — perhaps at most some five per cent. of it — is of a different nature, and consists of shells and skeletons composed of silex, or pure flint. These silicious bodies belong partly to those lowly vegetable organisms which are called *Diatomaceae*, and partly to those minute and extremely simple animals termed *Radiolarie*. It is quite certain that these creatures do not live at the bottom of the ocean, but at its surface — where they may be obtained in prodigious numbers by the use of a properly constructed net. Hence it follows that these silicious organisms, though they are not heavier than the very lightest dust, must have fallen in some cases through fifteen thousand feet of water, before they reached their final resting-place on the ocean floor. And, considering how large a surface these bodies expose in proportion to their weight, it is probable that they occupy a great length of time in making their burial journey from the surface of the Atlantic to the bottom.

But if the *Radiolarie* and Diatoms are thus rained upon the bottom of the sea from the superficial layer of its waters in which they pass their lives, it is obviously possi-

ble that the *Globigerina* may be similarly derived; and if they were so, it would be much more easy to understand how they obtain their supply of food than it is at present. Nevertheless, the positive and negative evidence all points the other way. The skeletons of the full-grown, deep-sea *Globigerina* are so remarkably solid and heavy in proportion to their surface as to seem little fitted for floating, and, as a matter of fact, they are not to be found along with the Diatoms and *Radiolaria* in the uppermost stratum of the open ocean.

It has been observed, again, that the abundance of *Globigerina*, in proportion to other organisms of like kind, increases with the depth of the sea; and that deep-water *Globigerina* are larger than those which live in shallower parts of the sea; and such facts negative the supposition that these organisms have been swept by currents from the shallows into the deeps of the Atlantic.

It therefore seems to be, hardly doubtful that these wonderful creatures live and die at the depths in which they are found.*

However, the important points for us are that the living *Globigerina* are exclusively marine animals, the skeletons of which abound at the bottom of deep seas; and that there is not a shadow of reason for believing that the habits of the *Globigerina* of the chalk differed from those of the existing species. But if this be true, there is no escaping the conclusion that the chalk itself is the dried mud of an ancient deep sea.

In working over the soundings collected by Captain Dayman, I was surprised to find that many of what I have called the "granules" of that mud, were not, as one might have been tempted to think at first, the mere powder and waste of *Globigerina*, but that they had a definite form and size. I termed these bodies "*coccoliths*," and doubted their organic nature. Dr. Wallich verified my observation, and added the interesting discovery that not unfrequently bodies similar to these "*coccoliths*" were aggregated together into spheroids, which he termed "*coccospheres*." So far as we knew, these bodies, the nature of which is extremely puzzling

* During the cruise of H. M. S. *Bull-Dog*, commanded by Sir Leopold M'Clinck, in 1880, living star-fish were brought up, clinging to the lowest part of the sounding line, from a depth of 1,260 fathoms, midway between Cape Farewell, in Greenland, and the Rockall banks. Dr. Wallich ascertained that the sea bottom at this point consisted of the ordinary *Globigerina* ooze, and that the stomachs of the star-fishes were full of *Globigerina*. This discovery removes all objections to the existence of living *Globigerina* at great depths, which are based upon the supposed difficulty of maintaining animal life under such conditions; and it throws the burden of proof upon those who object to the supposition that the *Globigerina* live and die where they are found.

and problematical, were peculiar to the Atlantic soundings.

But, a few years ago, Mr. Sorby, in making a careful examination of the chalk by means of thin sections and otherwise, observed, as Ehrenberg had done before him, that much of its granular basis possesses a definite form. Comparing these formed particles with those in the Atlantic soundings, he found the two to be identical; and thus proved that the chalk, like the soundings, contains these mysterious *coccoliths* and *coccospheres*. Here was a further and a most interesting confirmation, from internal evidence, of the essential identity of the chalk with modern deep-sea mud. *Globigerina*, *coccoliths*, and *coccospheres* are found as the chief constituents of both, and testify to the general similarity of the conditions under which both have been formed.*

The evidence furnished by the hewing, facing, and superposition of the stones of the Pyramids that these structures were built by men, has no greater weight than the evidence that the chalk was built by *Globigerina*; and the belief that those ancient Pyramid-builders were terrestrial and air-breathing creatures like ourselves, is not better based than the conviction that the chalk-makers lived in the sea.

But as our belief in the building of the Pyramids by men is not only grounded on the internal evidence afforded by these structures, but gathers strength from multitudinous collateral proofs, and is clinched by the total absence of any reason for a contrary belief; so the evidence drawn from the *Globigerina* that the chalk is an ancient sea-bottom, is fortified by innumerable independent lines of evidence; and our belief in the truth of the conclusion to which all positive testimony tends, receives the like negative justification from the fact that no other hypothesis has a shadow of foundation.

It may be worth while briefly to consider a few of these collateral proofs that the chalk was deposited at the bottom of the sea.

The great mass of the chalk is composed, as we have seen, of the skeletons of *Globigerina*, and other simple organisms, imbedded in granular matter. Here and there, however, this hardened mud of the ancient sea reveals the remains of higher animals which have lived and died, and left their

* I have recently traced out the development of the "*coccoliths*" from a diameter of one seven-thousandth of an inch up to their largest size (which is about one sixteen-hundredth), and no longer doubt that they are produced by independent organisms, which, like the *Globigerina*, live and die at the bottom of the sea.

hard parts in the mud, just as the oysters die and leave their shells behind them in the mud of the present seas.

There are certain groups of animals at the present day which are never found in fresh waters, being unable to live anywhere but in the sea. Such are the corals; those corallines which are called *Polyzoa*; those creatures which fabricate the lamp-shells, and are called *Brachiopoda*; the pearly *Nautilus*, and all animals allied to it; and all the forms of sea-urchins and star-fishes.

Not only are all these creatures confined to salt water at the present day; but, so far as our records of the past go, the conditions of their existence have been the same: hence their occurrence in any deposit is as strong evidence as can be obtained that that deposit was formed in the sea. Now the remains of animals of all the kinds which have been enumerated, occur in the chalk, in greater or less abundance; while not one of those forms of shell-fish which are characteristic of fresh water has yet been observed in it.

When we consider that the remains of more than three thousand distinct species of aquatic animals have been discovered among the fossils of the chalk, that the great majority of them are of such forms as are now met with only in the sea, and that there is no reason to believe that any one of them inhabited fresh water—the collateral evidence that the chalk represents an ancient sea-bottom acquires as great force as the proof derived from the nature of the chalk itself. I think you will now allow that I did not overstate my case when I asserted that we have as strong grounds for believing that all the vast area of dry land, at present occupied by the chalk, was once at the bottom of the sea, as we have for any matter of history whatever; while there is no justification for any other belief.

No less certain is it that the time during which the countries we now call south-east England, France, Germany, Poland, Russia, Egypt, Arabia, Syria, were more or less completely covered by a deep sea, was of considerable duration.

We have already seen that the chalk is, in places, more than a thousand feet thick. I think you will agree with me, that it must have taken some time for the skeletons of animalculæ of a hundredth of an inch in diameter to heap up such a mass as that. I have said that throughout the thickness of the chalk the remains of other animals are scattered. These remains are often in the most exquisite state of preservation. The valves of the shell-fishes are commonly adherent; the long spines of some of the sea-

urchins, which would be detached by the smallest jar, often remain in their places. In a word, it is certain that these animals have lived and died when the place which they now occupy was the surface of as much of the chalk as had then been deposited; and that each has been covered up by the layer of *Globigerina* mud, upon which the creatures imbedded a little higher up have in like manner lived and died. But some of these remains prove the existence of reptiles of vast size in the chalk sea. These lived their time, and had their ancestors and descendants, which assuredly implies time, reptiles being of slow growth.

There is more curious evidence, again, that the process of covering up, or, in other words, the deposit of *Globigerina* skeletons, did not go on very fast. It is demonstrable that an animal of the cretaceous sea might die, that its skeleton might lie uncovered upon the sea-bottom long enough to lose all its outward coverings and appendages by putrefaction; and that, after this had happened, another animal might attach itself to the dead and naked skeleton, might grow to maturity, and might itself die before the calcareous mud had buried the whole.

Cases of this kind are admirably described by Sir Charles Lyell. He speaks of the frequency with which geologists find in the chalk a fossilized sea-urchin, to which is attached the lower valve of a *Crania*. This is a kind of shell-fish, with a shell composed of two pieces, of which, as in the oyster, one is fixed and the other free.

"The upper valve is almost invariably wanting, though occasionally found in a perfect state of preservation in the white chalk at some distance. In this case, we see clearly that the sea-urchin first lived from youth to age, then died and lost its spines, which were carried away. Then the young *Crania* adhered to the bared shell, grew and perished in its turn; after which, the upper valve was separated from the lower, before the *Echinus* became enveloped in chalky mud."*

A specimen in the Museum of Practical Geology, in London, still further prolongs the period which must have elapsed between the death of the sea-urchin and its burial by the *Globigerinae*. For the outward face of a *Crania*, which is attached to a sea-urchin (*Micraster*), is itself overrun by an incrusting coralline, which spreads thence over more or less of the surface of the sea-urchin. It follows that, after the upper valve of the *Crania* fell off, the surface of

* "Elements of Geology," by Sir Charles Lyell, Bart., F.R.S., p. 23.

the attached valve must have remained exposed long enough to allow of the growth of the whole coralline, since corallines do not live imbedded in mud.

The progress of knowledge may one day enable us to deduce from such facts as these the maximum rate at which the chalk can have accumulated, and thus to arrive at the minimum duration of the chalk period. Suppose that the valve of the *Crania*, upon which a coralline has fixed itself in the way just described, is so attached to the sea-urchin that no part of it is more than an inch above the face upon which the sea-urchin rests. Then, as the coralline could not have fixed itself if the *Crania* had been covered up with chalk mud, and could not have lived had itself been so covered, it follows that an inch of chalk mud could not have accumulated within the time between the death and decay of the soft parts of the sea-urchin and the growth of the coralline to the full size which it has attained. If the decay of the soft parts of the sea-urchin, the attachment, growth to maturity, and decay of the *Crania*, and the subsequent attachment and growth of the coralline, took a year (which is a low estimate enough), the accumulation of the inch of chalk must have taken more than a year; and the deposit of a thousand feet of chalk must consequently have taken more than twelve thousand years.

The foundation of all this calculation is, of course, a knowledge of the length of time the *Crania* and the coralline needed to attain their full size; and on this head precise knowledge is at present wanting. But there are circumstances which tend to show that nothing like an inch of chalk has accumulated during the life of a *Crania*; and, on any probable estimate of the length of that life, the chalk period must have had a much longer duration than that thus roughly assigned to it.

Thus, not only is it certain that the chalk is the mud of an ancient sea-bottom, but it is no less certain that the chalk sea existed during an extremely long period, though we may not be prepared to give a precise estimate of the length of that period in years. The relative duration is clear, though the absolute duration may not be definable. The attempt to affix any precise date to the period at which the chalk sea began or ended its existence is baffled by difficulties of the same kind. But the relative age of the cretaceous epoch may be determined with as great ease and certainty as the long duration of that epoch.

You will have heard of the interesting discoveries recently made, in various parts

of Western Europe, of flint implements, obviously worked into shape by human hands, under circumstances which show conclusively that man is a very ancient denizen of these regions.

It has been proved that the old populations of Europe, whose existence has been revealed to us in this way, consisted of savages, such as the Esquimaux are now; that, in the country which is now France, they hunted the reindeer, and were familiar with the ways of the mammoth and the bison. The physical geography of France was in those days different from what it is now—the river Somme, for instance, having cut its bed a hundred feet deeper between that time and this; and it is probable that the climate was more like that of Canada or Siberia, than that of Western Europe.

The existence of these people is forgotten even in the traditions of the oldest historical nations. The name and fame of them had utterly vanished until a few years back; and the amount of physical change which has been effected since their day renders it more than probable that, venerable as are some of the historical nations, the workers of the chipped flints of Hoxne or of Amiens are to them as they are to us in point of antiquity.

But, if we assign to these hoar relics of long vanished generations of men the greatest age that can possibly be claimed for them, they are not older than the drift, or boulder clay, which, in comparison with the chalk, is but a very juvenile deposit. You need go no further than your own sea-board for evidence of this fact. At one of the most charming spots on the coast of Norfolk, Cromer, you will see the boulder clay forming a vast mass, which lies upon the chalk, and must consequently have come into existence after it. Huge boulders of chalk are, in fact, included in the clay, and have evidently been brought to the position they now occupy by the same agency as that which has planted blocks of syenite from Norway side by side with them.

The chalk, then, is certainly older than the boulder clay. If you ask how much, I will again take you no further than the same spot upon your own coasts for evidence. I have spoken of the boulder clay and drift as resting upon the chalk. This is not strictly true. Interposed between the chalk and the drift is a comparably insignificant layer, containing vegetable matter. But that layer tells a wonderful history. It is full of stumps of trees standing as they grew. Fir-trees are there with their cones, and hazel-bushes with their nuts; there stand the stools of oak and yew trees, beeches

and alders. Hence this stratum is appropriately called the "forest-bed."

It is obvious that the chalk must have been upheaved and converted into dry land before the timber trees could grow upon it. As the bolls of some of these trees are from two to three feet in diameter, it is no less clear that the dry land thus formed remained in the same condition for long ages. And not only do the remains of stately oaks and well-grown firs testify to the duration of this condition of things, but additional evidence to the same effect is afforded by the abundant remains of elephants, rhinoceroses, hippopotamuses, and other great wild beasts, which it has yielded to the zealous search of such men as the Rev. Mr. Gunn.

When you look at such a collection as he has formed, and bethink you that these elephantine bones did veritably carry their owners about, and these great grinders crunch in the dark woods of which the forest-bed is now the only trace, it is impossible not to feel that they are as good evidences of the lapse of time as the annual rings of the tree-stumps.

Thus there is a writing upon the wall of cliffs at Cromer, and whose runs may read it. It tells us, with an authority which cannot be impeached, that the ancient sea-bed of the chalk sea was raised up and remained dry land until it was covered with forest, stocked with the great game whose spoils have rejoiced your geologists. How long it remained in that condition cannot be said; but "the whirligig of time brought its revenges" in those days as in these. That dry land, with the bones and teeth of generations of long-lived elephants hidden away among the gnarled roots and dry leaves of its ancient trees, sank gradually to the bottom of the icy sea, which covered it with huge masses of drift and boulder clay. Sea-beasts, such as the walrus, now restricted to the extreme north, paddled about where birds had twittered among the topmost twigs of the fir-trees. How long this state of things endured we know not, but at length it came to an end. The upheaved glacial mud hardened into the soil of modern Norfolk. Forests grew once more, the wolf and the beaver replaced the reindeer and the elephant; and at length what we call the history of England dawned.

Thus you have, within the limits of your own county, proof that the chalk can justly claim a very much greater antiquity than even the oldest physical traces of mankind. But we may go further, and demonstrate, by evidence of the same authority as that which testifies to the existence of the fa-

ther of men, that the chalk is vastly older than Adam himself.

The Book of Genesis informs us that Adam, immediately upon his creation, and before the appearance of Eve, was placed in the Garden of Eden. The problem of the geographical position of Eden has greatly vexed the spirits of the learned in such matters, but there is one point respecting which, so far as I know, no commentator has ever raised a doubt. This is, that of the four rivers which are said to run out of it, Euphrates and Hiddekel are identical with the rivers now known by the names of Euphrates and Tigris.

But the whole country in which these mighty rivers take their origin, and through which they run, is composed of rocks which are either of the same age as the chalk, or of later date. So that the chalk must not only have been formed, but after its formation the time required for the deposit of these later rocks and for their upheaval into dry land must have elapsed, before the smallest brook which feeds the swift stream of "the great river, the river of Babylon," began to flow.

Thus evidence which cannot be rebutted, and which need not be strengthened, though if time permitted I might indefinitely increase its quantity, compels you to believe that the earth, from the time of the chalk to the present day, has been the theatre of a series of changes as vast in their amount as they were slow in their progress. The area on which we stand has been first sea and then land for at least four alternations, and has remained in each of these conditions for a period of great length.

Nor have these wonderful metamorphoses of sea into land, and of land into sea, been confined to one corner of England. During the chalk period, or "cretaceous epoch," not one of the present great physical features of the globe was in existence. Our great mountain ranges, Pyrenees, Alps, Himalayas, Andes, have all been upheaved since the chalk was deposited, and the cretaceous sea flowed over the sites of Sinai and Ararat.

All this is certain, because rocks of cretaceous or still later date have shared in the elevatory movements which gave rise to these mountain chains, and may be found perched up, in some cases, many thousand feet high upon their flanks. And evidence of equal cogency demonstrates that, though in Norfolk the forest-bed rests directly upon the chalk, yet it does so, not because the period at which the forest grew immediately

followed that at which the chalk was formed, but because an immense lapse of time, represented elsewhere by thousands of feet of rock, is not indicated at Cromer.

I must ask you to believe that there is no less conclusive proof that a still more prolonged succession of similar changes occurred before the chalk was deposited. Nor have we any reason to think that the first term in the series of these changes is known. The oldest sea-beds preserved to us are sands, and mud, and pebbles, the wear and tear of rocks which were formed in still older oceans.

But, great as is the magnitude of these physical changes of the world, they have been accompanied by a no less striking series of modifications in its living inhabitants.

All the great classes of animals, beasts of the field, fowls of the air, creeping things, and things which dwell in the waters, flourished upon the globe long ages before the chalk was deposited. Very few however, if any, of these ancient forms of animal life were identical with those which now live. Certainly, not one of the higher animals was of the same species as any of those now in existence. The beasts of the field in the days before the chalk were not our beasts of the field, nor the fowls of the air such as those which the eye of man has seen flying, unless his antiquity dates infinitely further back than we at present surmise. If we could be carried back into those times, we should be as one suddenly set down in Australia before it was colonized. We should see mammals, birds, reptiles, fishes, insects, snails, and the like, clearly recognisable as such, and yet not one of them would be just the same as those with which we are familiar, and many would be extremely different.

From that time to the present, the population of the world has undergone slow and gradual but incessant changes. There has been no grand catastrophe—no destroyer has swept away the forms of life of one period, and replaced them by a totally new creation; but one species has vanished and another has taken its place; creatures of one type of structure have diminished, those of another have increased, as time has passed on. And thus, while the differences between the living creatures of the time before the chalk and those of the present day appear startling, if placed side by side, we are led from one to the other by the most gradual progress, if we follow the course of Nature through the whole series of those relics of her operations which she has left behind.

And it is by the population of the chalk sea that the ancient and the modern inhabitants of the world are most completely connected. The groups which are dying out flourish side by side with the groups which are now the dominant forms of life.

Thus the chalk contains remains of those strange flying and swimming reptiles, the pterodactyl, the ichthyosaurus, and the plesiosaurus, which are found in no later deposits, but abounded in preceding ages. The chambered shells called ammonites and belemnites, which are so characteristic of the period preceding the cretaceous, in like manner die with it.

But amongst these fading remainders of a previous state of things are some very modern forms of life, looking like Yankee pedlars among a tribe of Red Indians. Crocodiles of modern type appear; bony fishes, many of them very similar to existing species, almost supplant the forms of fish which predominate in more ancient seas; and many kinds of living shell-fish first became known to us in the chalk. The vegetation acquires a modern aspect. A few living animals are not even distinguishable as species from those which existed at that remote epoch. The *Globigerina* of the present day, for example, is not different specifically from that of the chalk; and the same may be said of many other *Foraminifera*. I think it probable that critical and unprejudiced examination will show that more than one species of much higher animals have had a similar longevity, but the only example which I can at present give confidently is the snake's-head lamp-shell (*Terebratulina caput serpentis*), which lives in our English seas and abounded (as *Terebratulina striata* of authors) in the chalk.

The longest line of human ancestry must hide its diminished head before the pedigree of this insignificant shell-fish. We Englishmen are proud to have an ancestor who was present at the Battle of Hastings. The ancestors of *Terebratulina caput serpentis* may have been present at a battle of *Ichthyosauria* in that part of the sea which, when the chalk was forming, flowed over the site of Hastings. While all around has changed, this *Terebratulina* has peacefully propagated its species from generation to generation, and stands to this day, as a living testimony to the continuity of the present with the past history of the globe.

Up to this moment I have stated, so far as I know, nothing but well-authenticated facts, and the immediate conclusions which they force upon the mind.

But the mind is so constituted that it

does not willingly rest in facts and immediate causes, but seeks always after a knowledge of the remoter links in the chain of causation.

Taking the many changes of any given spot of the earth's surface, from sea to land and from land to sea, as an established fact, we cannot refrain from asking ourselves how these changes have occurred. And when we have explained them—as they must be explained—by the alternate slow movements of elevation and depression which have affected the crust of the earth, we go still further back, and ask, Why these movements?

I am not certain that any one can give you a satisfactory answer to that question. Assuredly I cannot. All that can be said for certain is, that such movements are part of the ordinary course of nature, inasmuch as they are going on at the present time. Direct proof may be given that some parts of the land of the northern hemisphere are at this moment insensibly rising and others insensibly sinking; and there is indirect but perfectly satisfactory proof, that an enormous area now covered by the Pacific has been deepened thousands of feet since the present inhabitants of that sea came into existence.

Thus there is not a shadow of a reason for believing that the physical changes of the globe in past times have been effected by other than natural causes.

Is there any more reason for believing that the concomitant modifications in the forms of the living inhabitants of the globe have been brought about in other ways?

Before attempting to answer this question, let us try to form a distinct mental picture of what has happened in some special case.

The crocodiles are animals which, as a group, have a very vast antiquity. They abounded ages before the chalk was deposited; they throng the rivers in warm climates at the present day. There is a difference in the form of the joints of the backbone, and in some minor particulars, between the crocodile of the present epoch, and those which lived before the chalk; but, in the cretaceous epoch, as I have already mentioned, the crocodiles had assumed the modern type of structure. Notwithstanding this, the crocodiles of the chalk are not identically the same as those which lived in the times called "older tertiary," which succeeded the cretaceous epoch; and the crocodiles of the older tertiaries are not identical with those of the newer tertiaries, nor are these identical with existing forms. (I leave open the question whether particu-

lar species may have lived on from epoch to epoch.) Thus each epoch has had its peculiar crocodiles, though all since the chalk have belonged to the modern type, and differ simply in their proportions, and in such structural particulars as are discernible only to trained eyes.

How is the existence of this long succession of different species of crocodile to be accounted for?

Only two suppositions seem to be open to us—Either each species of crocodile has been specially created, or it has arisen out of some pre-existing form by the operation of natural causes.

Choose your hypothesis; I have chosen mine. I can find no warranty for believing in the distinct creation of a score of successive species of crocodiles in the course of countless ages of time. Science gives no countenance to such a wild fancy; nor can even the perverse ingenuity of a commentator pretend to discover this sense in the simple words in which the writer of Genesis records the proceedings of the fifth and sixth days of the Creation.

On the other hand, I see no good reason for doubting the necessary alternative, that all these varied species have been evolved from pre-existing crocodilian forms by the operation of causes as completely a part of the common order of nature as those which have effected the changes of the inorganic world.

Few will venture to affirm that the reasoning which applies to crocodiles loses its force among other animals, or among plants. If one series of species has come into existence by the operation of natural causes, it seems folly to deny that all may have arisen in the same way.

A small beginning has led us to a great ending. If I were to put the bit of chalk with which we started into the hot but obscure flame of burning hydrogen, it would presently shine like the sun. It seems to me that this physical metamorphosis is no false image of what has been the result of our subjecting it to a jet of fervent though nowise brilliant thought to-night. It has become luminous, and its clear rays, penetrating the abyss of the remote past, have brought within our ken some stages of the evolution of the earth. And in the shifting "without haste, but without rest" of the land and sea, as in the endless variation of the forms assumed by living beings, we have observed nothing but the natural product of the forces originally possessed by the substance of the universe.

From Fraser's Magazine.

ON THE FAILURE OF 'NATURAL SELECTION' IN THE CASE OF MAN.

EVERY one now is familiar with the Darwinian theory of the origin of species, at least in its main principles and outlines: and nearly all men qualified to form an opinion are convinced of its substantial truth. That theory explains how races of animals vary as ages roll on, so as to adapt themselves to the changing external conditions which those ages bring about. At every given moment, in every given spot on the earth's surface, a 'struggle for existence' is going on among all the forms of organic life, animal and vegetable, then and there alive; a struggle in which, as there is not room for all, the weaker and less adapted succumb, while the stronger and better adapted survive and multiply. As surrounding circumstances, climatic or geological, vary and are modified, corresponding variations (such as are always incidentally appearing among the offspring of all creatures) in the inhabitants of each district crop up, increase, spread, and become permanent. The creatures that are most in harmony with surrounding circumstances have a manifest daily and hourly advantage over those which are less in harmony: live when they die; flourish when they fade; endure through what kills others; can find food, catch prey, escape enemies, when their feeble, slower, blunder brethren are starved and slain. Thus the

* The grand feature in the multiplication of organic life is that of close general resemblance, combined with more or less individual variation. The child resembles its parents or ancestors more or less closely in all its peculiarities, deformities, or beauties; it resembles them in general more than it does any other individuals; yet children of the same parents are not all alike, and it often happens that they differ very considerably from their parents and from each other. This is equally true of man, of all animals, and of all plants. Moreover, it is found that individuals do not differ from their parents in certain particulars only, while in all others they are exact duplicates of them. They differ from them and from each other in every particular: in form, in size, in colour, in the structure of internal as well as of external organs; in those subtle peculiarities which produce differences of constitution, as well as in those still more subtle ones which lead to modifications of mind and character. In other words, in every possible way, in every organ and in every function, individuals of the same stock vary.

Now, health, strength, and long life are the results of a harmony between the individual and the universe that surrounds it. Let us suppose that at any given moment this harmony is perfect. A certain animal is exactly fitted to secure its prey, to escape from its enemies, to resist the inclemencies of the seasons, and to rear a numerous and healthy offspring. But a change now takes place. A series of cold winters, for instance, come on, making food scarce, and bringing an immigration of some other animals to compete with the former inhabitants of the district. The new immigrant is swift of foot and surpasses its rivals in the pursuit of game; the winter nights are colder, and require a thicker fur as a protection, and more nourishing food to keep

most perfect specimens of each race and tribe, the strongest, the swiftest, the healthiest, the most courageous—those fullest of vitality—live longest, feed best, overcome their competitors in the choice of mates; and, in virtue of these advantages, become—as it is desirable they should be—the progenitors of the future race. The poorer specimens, the sick, the faulty, the weak, are slain or drop out of existence; are distanced in the chase, are beaten in the fight, can find no females to match with them; and the species is propagated and continued mainly, increasingly, if not exclusively, from its finest and most selected individuals—in a word, its *élite*.

This explains not only those extraordinary changes in the form and habits of the same animals which, when aided and aggravated by man's requirements and careful management, strike us so forcibly in domesticated races, but also those purely natural though far slower modifications which geological researches have brought to our knowledge. Mr. Wallace, in the admirable paper quoted below—which is a perfect model of succinct statement and lucid rea-

soning—explains the heat of the system. Our supposed perfect animal is no longer in harmony with its universe; it is in danger of dying of cold or of starvation. But the animal varies in its offspring. Some of these are swifter than others—they still manage to catch food enough; some are harder and more thickly furred—they manage in the cold nights to keep warm enough; the slow, the weak, and the thinly clad soon die off. Again and again, in each succeeding generation, the same thing takes place. By this natural process, which is so inevitable that it cannot be conceived not to act, those best adapted to live, live; those least adapted, die. It is sometimes said that we have no direct evidence of the action of this selecting power in nature. But it seems to me we have better evidence than even direct observation would be, because it is more universal, viz. the evidence of necessity. It must be so; for, as all wild animals increase in a geometrical ratio, while their actual numbers remain on the average stationary, it follows that as many die annually as are born. If, therefore, we deny natural selection, it can only be by asserting that in such a case as I have supposed the strong, the healthy, the swift, the well clad, the well organised animals in every respect, have no advantage over,—do not on the average live longer than, the weak, the unhealthy, the slow, the ill clad, and the imperfectly organised individuals; and this no sane man has yet been found hardy enough to assert. But this is not all; for the offspring on the average resemble their parents, and the selected portion of each succeeding generation will therefore be stronger, swifter, and more thickly furred than the last; and if this process goes on for thousands of generations, our animal will have again become thoroughly in harmony with the new conditions in which he is placed. But he will now be a different creature. He will be not only swifter and stronger, and more furry; he will also probably have changed in colour, in form, perhaps have acquired a longer tail, or differently shaped ears; for it is an ascertained fact, that when one part of an animal is modified, some other parts almost always change as it were in sympathy with it.—Wallace 'On the Origin of Human Races,' *Journal of the Anthropological Society*, No. 6.

soning—has pointed out how this principle of natural selection has been modified, and in a manner veiled and disguised, though by no means either neutralised or suspended, in the case of MAN; so that neither history nor geology enables us to trace any change in his external structure analogous to those which we find in such abundance and to such a remarkable extent in the case of the lower animals. He adapts himself, just as they do, to the altered conditions of external nature, but he does it by mental not by bodily modifications. As with them, so with him, the best adapted to surrounding circumstances, the most in harmony with the imperious necessities of life, surmount, survive, and multiply; but in this case the adaptation is made and the harmony secured by intellectual and moral efforts and qualities, which leave no stamp on the corporeal frame. As with them, inferior varieties and individuals succumb and die out in the eternal and universal 'struggle for existence;' only, in the case of man, the inferiority which determines their fate is inferiority not of muscle, of stomach, or of skin, but of brain.

In man, as we now behold him, this is different. He is social and sympathetic. In the rudest tribes the sick are assisted at least with food; less robust health and vigour than the average does not entail death. Neither does the want of perfect limbs or other organs produce the same effect as among the lower animals. Some division of labour takes place; the swiftest hunt, the less active fish or gather fruits; food is to some extent exchanged or divided. The action of natural selection is therefore checked, the weaker, the dwarfish, those of less active limbs or less piercing eyesight, do not suffer the extreme penalty which falls on animals so defective.

In proportion as these physical characteristics become of less importance, mental and moral qualities will have increasing influence on the well-being of the race. Capacity for acting in concert, for protection and for the acquisition of food and shelter; sympathy, which leads all in turn to assist each other; the sense of right, which checks depredations upon our fellows; the decrease of the combative and destructive propensities; self-restraint in present appetites; and that intelligent foresight which prepares for the future, are all qualities that from their earliest appearance must have been for the benefit of each community, and would, therefore, have become the subjects of 'natural selection.' For it is evident that such qualities would be for the well-being of man; would guard him against external enemies, against internal dissensions, and against the effects of inclement seasons and impending famine, more surely than could any merely physical modification. Tribes in which such mental and moral qualities were predominant, would therefore have an advantage in the struggle for existence over other tribes in which

they were less developed, would live and maintain their numbers, while the others would decrease and finally succumb.

Again, when any slow changes of physical geography, or of climate, make it necessary for an animal to alter its food, its clothing, or its weapons, it can only do so by a corresponding change in its own bodily structure and internal organisation. If a larger or more powerful beast is to be captured and devoured, as when a carnivorous animal which has hitherto preyed on sheep is obliged from their decreasing numbers to attack buffaloes, it is only the strongest who can hold, — those with most powerful claws, and formidable canine teeth, that can struggle with and overcome such an animal. Natural selection immediately comes into play, and by its action these organs gradually become adapted to their new requirements. But man, under similar circumstances, does not require longer nails or teeth, greater bodily strength or swiftness. He makes sharper spears, or a better bow, or he constructs a cunning pitfall, or combines in a hunting party to circumvent his new prey. The capacities which enable him to do this are what he requires to be strengthened, and these will, therefore, be gradually modified by 'natural selection,' while the form and structure of his body will remain unchanged. So when a glacial epoch comes on, some animals must acquire warmer fur, or a covering of fat, or else die of cold. Those best clothed by nature are, therefore, preserved by natural selection. Man, under the same circumstances, will make himself warmer clothing, and build better houses; and the necessity for doing this will react upon his mental organisation and social condition — will advance them while his natural body remains naked as before.

When the accustomed food of some animal becomes scarce or totally fails, it can only exist by becoming adapted to a new kind of food, a food perhaps less nourishing and less digestible. 'Natural selection' will now act upon the stomach and intestines, and all their individual variations will be taken advantage of to modify the race into harmony with its new food. In many cases, however, it is probable that this cannot be done. The internal organs may not vary quick enough, and then the animal will decrease in numbers and finally become extinct. But man guards himself from such accidents by superintending and guiding the operations of nature. He plants the seed of his most agreeable food, and thus procures a supply independent of the accidents of varying seasons or natural extinction. He domesticates animals which serve him either to capture food or for food itself, and thus changes of any great extent in his teeth or digestive organs are rendered unnecessary. Man, too, has everywhere the use of fire, and by its means can render palatable a variety of animal and vegetable substances, which he could hardly otherwise make use of, and thus obtain for himself a supply of food far more varied and abundant than that which any animal can command.

Thus man, by the mere capacity of clothing himself, and making weapons and tools, has taken away from nature that power of changing the external form and structure which she exercises over all other animals. As the competing races by which they are surrounded, the climate, the vegetation, or the animals which serve them for food, are slowly changing, they must undergo a corresponding change in their structure, habits, and constitution, to keep them in harmony with the new conditions — to enable them to live and maintain their numbers. But man does this by means of his intellect alone; which enables him with an unchanged body still to keep in harmony with the changing universe.

From the time, therefore, when the social and sympathetic feelings come into active operation, and the intellectual and moral faculties become fairly developed, man would cease to be influenced by 'natural selection' in his physical form and structure; as an animal he would remain almost stationary; the changes of the surrounding universe would cease to have upon him that powerful modifying effect which they exercise over other parts of the organic world. But from the moment that his body became stationary, his mind would become subject to those very influences from which his body had escaped; every slight variation in his mental and moral nature which should enable him better to guard against adverse circumstances, and combine for mutual comfort and protection, would be preserved and accumulated; the better and higher specimens of our race would therefore increase and spread, the lower and more brutal would give way and successively die out, and that rapid advancement of mental organisation would occur which has raised the very lowest races of men so far above the brutes (although differing so little from some of them in physical structure), and, in conjunction with scarcely perceptible modifications of form, has developed the wonderful intellect of the Germanic races.

But this is by no means the whole of the case. As we follow out the reflections suggested by this argument, an entirely new series of consequences and operations opens before us. We perceive that the law of 'natural selection,' and of 'the preservation of favoured races and individuals in the struggle for existence,' has become in the course of man's progress not only thus modified, as Mr. Wallace points out, and directed to one part of his organisation (the brain) alone, but positively suspended, and in many instances almost reversed. It even dawns upon us that our existing civilisation, which is the result of the operation of this law in past ages, may be actually retarded and endangered by its tendency to neutralise that law in one or two most material and significant particulars. The great, wise, righteous, and beneficent principle which in all other animals, and in man himself, up

to a certain stage of his progress, tends to the improvement and perfection of the race, would appear to be forcibly interfered with and nearly set aside; nay, to be set aside pretty much in direct proportion to the complication, completeness, and *culmination* of our civilisation. We do not assert that if our civilisation were purely and philosophically ideal — perfect in character as well as splendid and lofty in degree — this result would follow, or would continue; but it certainly does follow now, and it delays and positively *menaces* the attainment of that ideal condition. Our thesis is this: that the indisputable effect of the state of social progress and culture we have reached, of our high civilisation, in a word, is to counteract and suspend the operation of that righteous and salutary law of 'natural selection' in virtue of which the best specimens of the race — the strongest, the finest, the worthiest — are those which survive, surmount, become paramount, and take precedence; succeed and triumph in the struggle for existence, become the especial progenitors of future generations, continue the species, and propagate an ever improving and perfecting type of humanity.

The principle does not appear to fail in the case of *races* of men. Here the abler, the stronger, the more advanced, the finer in short, are still the favoured ones, succeed in the competition; exterminate, govern, supersede, fight, eat, or work the inferior tribes out of existence. The process is quite as certain, and nearly as rapid, whether we are just or unjust; whether we use carefulness or cruelty. Everywhere the savage tribes of mankind die out at the contact of the civilised ones. Sometimes they are extinguished by conquest and the sword; sometimes by the excessive toil which avaricious victors impose upon the feeble vanquished; often by the diseases which the more artificial man brings with him and which flourish with fearful vigour in a virgin soil; occasionally they fade away before the superior vitality and prolific energy of the invading race in lands where there is not room for both; in some cases before the new and unsuitable habits which civilisation tries to introduce among them; not unfrequently it would seem from some mysterious blight which the mere presence of a superior form of humanity casts over them. But, in every part of the world, and in every instance, the result has been the same; the process of extinction is either completed or actively at work. The Indians of the Antilles, the Red man of North America, the South Sea Islanders, the Australians, even the New Zealanders (the finest and

most pliable and teachable of savages), are all alike dying out with sad rapidity — in consequence of the harshness, or in spite of the forbearance and protection, of the stronger and more capable European. The negro alone survives — and, but for the observation of what is now going on in our sugar islands and in the United States, we should say seems likely to survive. He only has been able to hold his own in a fashion, and to live and flourish side by side with masterful and mightier races, though in a questionable relation and with questionable results. But the exception is a confirmation of the general law. The negro is not only strong, docile, and prolific, but in some respects he is better adapted to surrounding conditions than his European neighbour, conqueror, or master; in certain climates he, and not the white man, is 'the favoured race;' and for many generations, perhaps for ages, in the burning regions about the equator, a black skin may take precedence of a large brain, and be a more indispensable condition of existence; or possibly the brain may grow larger without the skin growing any whiter. The principle of 'natural selection' therefore — of the superior and fitter races of mankind trampling out and replacing the poorer races, in virtue of their superior fitness — would seem to hold good universally.

So probably it does also, and always has done, in the case of *nations*; and the apparent exceptions to the rule may be due only to our erroneous estimate of the true elements of superiority. In the dawn of history the more cultivated and energetic races conquered the weaker and less advanced, reduced them to slavery, or taught them civilisation. It is true that in the case of the Greeks and Romans the coarser organisation and less developed brain of the latter easily overpowered and overshadowed probably the finest physical and intellectual nature that has yet appeared upon the earth; but the Greeks, when they succumbed, had fallen away from the perfection of their palmy days; they were enervated and corrupt to the very core; and the robust will and unequalled political genius of their Roman conquerors constituted an undeniable superiority. They triumphed by the law of the strongest — though their strength might not lie precisely in the noblest portion of man's nature. Intellectually the inferiors of the Greeks whom they subdued, they were morally and *volitionally* more vigorous. The same may be said of those rude Northern warriors who at a later period flowed over and mastered the degenerate Roman world. They

had no culture, but they had vast capacities; and they brought with them a renovating irruption of that hard energy and redundant vitality which luxury and success had nearly extinguished among those they conquered. They were then "the most favoured race," the fittest for the exigencies of the hour, the best adapted to the conditions of the life around them; they prevailed, therefore, by reason of a very indisputable, though not the most refined sort of, superiority. With the nations of modern history, the same rule has governed the current of the world, though perhaps with more instances of at least apparent exception. Each nation that has dominated in turn, or occupied the first post in the world's annals, has done so by right of some one quality, achievement, or possession — then especially needed — which made it for the time the stronger, if not intrinsically the nobler, among many rivals. Intellect, and intellect applied alike to art, to commerce, and to science, at one period made the Italians the most prominent people in Europe. There was an undeniable grandeur in the Spanish nation in its culminating years towards the close of the fifteenth century which gave it a right to rule, and at once explained and justified both its discoveries and its conquests. No one can say that France has not fairly won her vast influence and her epochs of predominance by her wonderful military spirit and the peculiarity of her singularly clear, keen, restless, but not rich, intelligence. England owes her world-wide dominion and (what is far more significant and a greater subject for felicitation) the wide diffusion of her race over the globe, to a daring and persistent energy with which no other variety of mankind is so largely dowered. And if in modern conflicts might has sometimes triumphed over right, and the finer and kinder people fallen before the assaults of the stronger, and the events of history run counter to all our truer and juster sympathies, it is probably because, in the counsels of the Most High, energy is seen to be more needed than culture to carry on the advancement of humanity, and a commanding will, at least in this stage of our progress, a more essential endowment than an amiable temper or a good heart. At all events it is those who in some sense are the **STRONGEST** and the **fittest** who most prevail, multiply, and spread, and become in the largest measure the progenitors of future nations.

But when we come to the case of individuals in a people, or classes in a community — the phase of the question which has far the most practical and immediate interest

for ourselves — the principle fails altogether, and the law is no longer supreme. Civilisation, with its social, moral, and material complications, has introduced a disturbing and conflicting element. It is not now, as Mr. Wallace depicts, that intellectual has been substituted for physical superiority, but that artificial and conventional have taken the place of natural advantages as the ruling and deciding force. It is no longer the strongest, the healthiest, the most perfectly organised; it is not men of the finest *physique*, the largest brain, the most developed intelligence, that are 'favoured' and successful 'in the struggle for existence' — that survive, that rise to the surface, that 'natural selection' makes the parents of future generations, the continuators of a picked and perfected race. It is still 'the most favoured,' no doubt, in some sense, who bear away the palm, but the indispensable favour is that of fortune, not of nature. The various influences of our social system combine to traverse the righteous and salutary law which God ordained for the preservation of a worthy and improving humanity; and the 'varieties' of man that endure and multiply their likenesses, and mould the features of the coming times, are not the soundest constitutions that can be found among us, nor the most subtle and resourceful minds, nor the most amiable or self-denying tempers, nor even the most imperious and persistent wills, but often the precise reverse — often those emasculated by luxury and those damaged by want, those rendered reckless by squalid poverty, and those whose physical and mental energies have been sapped, and whose *morale* has been grievously impaired, by long indulgence and forestalled desires.

The two great instruments and achievements of civilisation, are respect for life and respect for property. In proportion as both are secure, as life is prolonged, and as wealth is accumulated, so nations rise — or consider that they have risen. Among wild animals the sick and maimed are slain; among savages they succumb and die; among us they are cared for, kept alive, enabled to marry and multiply. In uncivilised tribes, the ineffective and incapable, the weak in body or in mind, are unable to provide themselves food; they fall behind in the chase or in the march, they fall out, therefore, in the race of life. With us, sustenance and shelter are provided for them, and they survive. We pride ourselves — and justly — on the increased length of life which has been effected by our science and our humanity.

But we forget that this higher average of *life* may be compatible with, and may in a measure result from, a lower average of *health*. We have kept alive those who, in a more natural and less advanced state, would have died — and who, looking at the physical perfection of the race alone, had better have been left to die. Among savages, the vigorous and sound alone survive; among us, the diseased and enfeebled survive as well; — but is either the *physique* or the intelligence of cultivated man the gainer by the change? In a wild state, by the law of natural selection, only, or chiefly, the sounder or stronger specimens were allowed to continue their species; with us, thousands with tainted constitutions, with frames weakened by malady or waste, with brains bearing subtle and hereditary mischief in their recesses, are suffered to transmit their terrible inheritance of evil to other generations, and to spread it through a whole community.

Security of property, security for its transmission, as well as for its enjoyment, is one of our chief boasts. Thousands upon thousands who never could themselves have acquired property by industry, or conquered it by courage, or kept it by strength or ingenuity, and who are utterly incompetent to use it well, are yet enabled by law to inherit and retain it. They are born to wealth, they revel in wealth, though destitute of all the qualities by which wealth is won, or its possession made a blessing to the community. In a natural state of society they would have been pushed out of existence, jostled aside in the struggle and the race, and left by the way to die. In civilised communities they are protected, fostered, flattered, married, and empowered to hand down their rapid incapacities to numerous offspring, whom perhaps they can leave wealthy too. In old and highly advanced nations, the classes who wield power, and affluence, and social supremacy as a consequence of the security of property, do not as a rule consist — nay, consist in a very small measure — of individuals who have won, or could have won, those influences for themselves — of natural 'kings of men;' the *élite* lots in life do not fall to the *élite* of the race or the community. Those possessions and that position, which in more simply organised tribes would be an indication and a proof either of strength, of intelligence, or of some happy adaptation to surrounding exigencies, now in our complicated world indicate nothing — at least in five cases out of six — but merit or energy or luck in some ancestor, perhaps inconceivably remote,

who has bequeathed his rank and property to his successors, but without the qualities which won them and warranted them. Yet this property and rank still enable their possibly unworthy and incapable inheritors to take precedence over others in many of the walks of life, to carry off the most desirable brides from less favoured though far nobler rivals, and (what is our present point) to make these brides the mothers of a degenerating, instead of an ever improving race.

But even this by no means presents the whole strength of the case. Not only does civilisation, as it exists among us, enable rank and wealth, however diseased, enfeebled, or unintelligent, to become the continuators of the species in preference to larger brains, stronger frames, and sounder constitutions; but that very rank and wealth, thus inherited without effort and in absolute security, tend to produce enervated and unintelligent offspring. To be born in the purple is not the right introduction to healthy energy; to be surrounded from the cradle with all temptations and facilities to self-indulgence, is not the best safe-guard against those indulgences which weaken the intellect and exhaust the frame. No doubt *noblesse oblige*, and riches can buy the highest education, bating that education by surrounding circumstances which is really the only one that tells very effectually on the youthful plant. No doubt, too, there are splendid and numerous exceptions — instances in which rank is used to mould its heir to its duties, and in which wealth is used to purchase and achieve all that makes life noble and beneficent. But we have only to look around us, and a little below the surface, and then ask ourselves whether as a rule, the owners of rank and wealth — still more the owners of wealth without rank — are those from whose paternity we should have most right to anticipate a healthy, a noble, an energetic, or a truly intellectual offspring — a race fitted to control and guide themselves as well as others, to subdue the earth as well as to replenish it, to govern, to civilise, to illustrate, to carry forward, the future destinies of man?

And if it is not from the highest and most opulent, assuredly it is not from the lowest and most indigent. The *physique* and the *morale* of both the extreme classes are imperfect and impaired. The *physique* of the rich is injured by indulgence and excess — that of the poor by privation and want. The *morale* of the former has never been duly called forth by the necessity for exertion and self-denial; that of the latter has never been cultivated by training and in-

struction. The intellects of both have been exposed to opposite disadvantages. The organisations of neither class are the best in the community; the constitutions of neither are the soundest or most untainted. Yet these two classes are precisely those which are, or are likely to be, preponderatingly, the fathers of the coming generation. Both marry as early as they please and have as many children as they please, — the rich because it is in their power, the poor because they have no motive for abstinence; — and as we know, scanty food and hard circumstances do not oppose but rather encourage procreation. Malthus's 'prudential check' rarely operates upon the lower classes; the poorer they are, usually, the faster do they multiply; certainly the more reckless they are in reference to multiplication. It is the middle classes, those who form the energetic, reliable, improving element of the population, those who wish to rise and do not choose to sink, those in a word who are the true strength and wealth and dignity of nations, — it is these who abstain from marriage or postpone it. Thus the imprudent, the desperate, — those whose standard is low, those who have no hope, no ambition, no self-denial, — on the one side, and the pampered favourites of fortune on the other, take precedence in the race of fatherhood, to the disadvantage or the exclusion of the prudent, the resolute, the striving and the self-restrained. The very men whom a philosophic statesman or a guide of some superior race would select as most qualifying and deserving to continue the race, are precisely those who do so in the scantiest measure. Those who have no need for exertion, and those who have no opportunities for culture, those whose frames are damaged by indulgence, and those whose frames are weakened by privation, breed *ad libitum*; while those whose minds and bodies have been hardened, strengthened and purified by temperance and toil, are elbowed quietly aside in the unequal press. Surely the 'selection' is no longer 'natural.' The careless, squalid, unaspiring Irishman, fed on potatoes, living in a pig-stye, doting on a superstition, multiplies like rabbits or ephemera: — the frugal, foreseeing, self-respecting, ambitious Scot, stern in his morality, spiritual in his faith, sagacious and disciplined in his intelligence, passes his best years in struggle and in celibacy, marries late, and leaves few behind him. Given a land originally peopled by a thousand Saxons and a thousand Celts, — and in a dozen generations, five-sixths of the population would be Celts, but five-sixths of the property, of the power, of the intellect,

would belong to the one-sixth of Saxons that remained. In the eternal 'struggle for existence,' it would be the inferior and *less* favoured race that had prevailed, — and prevailed by virtue not of its qualities but of its faults, by reason not of its stronger vitality but of its weaker reticence and its narrower brain.

Of course it will be urged that the principle of natural selection fails thus utterly because our civilisation is imperfect and misdirected; because our laws are insufficient; because our social arrangements are unwise; because our moral sense is languid or unenlightened. No doubt, if our legislators and rulers were quite sagacious and quite stern, and our people in all ranks quite wise and good, the beneficent tendencies of nature would continue to operate uncounteracted. No constitutions would be impaired by insufficient nutriment and none by unhealthy excess. No classes would be so undeveloped either in mind or muscle as to be unfitted for procreating sound and vigorous offspring. The sick, the tainted, and the maimed, would be too sensible and too unselfish to dream of marrying and handing down to their children the curse of diseased or feeble frames; — or if they were not self-controlled, the state would exercise a salutary but unrelenting paternal despotism, and supply the deficiency by vigilant and timely prohibition. A republic is *conceivable* in which paupers should be forbidden to propagate; in which all candidates for the proud and solemn privilege of continuing an untainted and perfecting race should be subjected to a pass or a competitive examination, and those only should be suffered to transmit their names and families to future generations who had a pure, vigorous and well-developed constitution to transmit; — so that paternity should be the right and function exclusively of the *élite* of the nation, and humanity be thus enabled to march on securely and without drawback to its ultimate possibilities of progress. Every damaged or inferior temperament might be eliminated, and every special and superior one be selected and enthroned, — till the human race, both in its manhood and its womanhood, became one glorious congregation of saints, sages, and athletes: — till we were all Blondins, all Shakespeares, Pericles', Socrates', Columbuses and Fénémons. But no nation — in modern times at least — has ever yet approached this ideal; no such wisdom or virtue has ever been found except in isolated individual instances; no government and no statesman has ever yet dared thus to supplement the inadequacy of

personal patriotism by laws so sapiently despotic. The face of the leading peoples of the existing world is not even set in this direction — but rather the reverse. The tendencies of the age are three especially; and all three run counter to the operation of the wholesome law of 'natural selection.' We are learning to insist more and more on the freedom of the individual will, the right of every one to judge and act for himself. We are growing daily more foolishly and criminally lenient to every natural propensity, less and less inclined to resent, or control, or punish its indulgence. We absolutely refuse to let the poor, the incapable, or the diseased die; we enable or allow them, if we do not actually encourage them, to propagate their incapacity, poverty, and constitutional disorders. And, lastly, democracy is every year advancing in power, and claiming the supreme right to govern and to guide: — and democracy means the management and control of social arrangements by the least educated classes, — by those least trained to foresee or measure consequences, — least acquainted with the fearfully rigid laws of hereditary transmission, — least habituated to repress desires, or to forego immediate enjoyment for future and remote good.

Obviously, no artificial prohibitions or restraints, no laws imposed from above and from without, can restore the principle of 'natural selection' to its due supremacy among the human race. No people in our days would endure the necessary interference and control; and perhaps a result so acquired might not be worth the cost of acquisition. We can only trust to the slow influences of enlightenment and moral susceptibility, percolating downwards and in time permeating all ranks. We can only watch and be careful that any other influences we do set in motion shall be such as, where they work at all, may work in the right direction. At present the prospect is not reassuring. We are progressing fast in many points, no doubt, but the progress is not wholly nor always of the right sort, nor without a large *per contra*. Legislation and philanthropy are improving the condition of the masses, but they are more and more losing the guidance and governance of the masses. Wealth accumulates above, and wages rise below; but the cost of living augments with both operations, till those classes — the stamina of the nation — which are neither too rich nor too poor to fear a fall, find marriage a hazardous adventure, and dread the burden of large families. Medical science is mitigating suffering, and achieving some success in its warfare against

disease; but at the same time it enables the diseased to live. It controls and sometimes half cures the maladies that spring from profligacy and excess, but in so doing it encourages both, by stepping in between the cause and its consequence, and saving them from their natural and deterring penalties. It reduces the aggregate mortality by sanitary improvements and precautions; but

those whom it saves from dying prematurely it preserves to propagate dismal and imperfect lives. In our complicated modern communities a race is being run between moral and mental enlightenment and the deterioration of the physical constitution through the defeasance of the law of natural selection; — and on the issues of that race the destinies of humanity depend.

From Macmillan's Magazine.

AUTUMNAL ODE.

BY AUBREY DE VERE.

I.

MINSTREL and Genius, to whose songs or sighs
The round earth modulates her changeful
sphere,

That bend'st in shadow from yon western skies,
And lean'st, cloud-hid, along the woodlands
sere,

Too deep thy tones — too pure — for mortal
ear!

Yet Nature hears them: without aid of thine
How sad were her decline!

From thee she learns with just and soft gradation
Her dying hues in death to harmonize;
Through thee her obsequies

A glory wear that conquers desolation.
Through thee she singeth, "Faithless were the
sighing

"Breathed o'er a beauty only born to fleet:

"A holy thing and precious is the dying

"Of that whose life was innocent and sweet."

From many a dim retreat
Lodged on high-bosomed, echoing, mountain-
lawn,

Or chiming convent in dark vale withdrawn,
From cloudy shrine or rapt oracular seat
Voices of loftier worlds that saintly strain repeat.

II.

It is the Autumnal Epode of the year:

The nymphs that urge the seasons on their
round,

They to whose green lap flies the startled deer
When bays the far off hound,

They that drag April by the rain-bright hair,
(Though sun-showers daze her and the rude
winds scare)

O'er March's frosty bound,

They by whose warm and furtive hand unwound
The cestus falls from May's new-wedded
breast —

Silent they stand beside dead Summer's bier,
With folded palms, and faces to the West,
And their loose tresses sweep the dewy ground.

III.

A sacred stillness hangs upon the air,
A sacred clearness. Distant shapes draw nigh:

Glistens yon Elm-grove, to its heart laid bare,
And all articulate in its symmetry,
With here and there a branch that from on
high

Far flashes washed as in a watery gleam:
Beyond, the glossy lake lies calm — a beam
Upheaved, as if in sleep, from its slow central
stream.

IV.

This quiet — is it Truth, or some fair mask?

Is pain no more? Shall Sleep be lord, not
Death?

Shall sickness cease to afflict and overtask
The spent and labouring breath?

Is there among yon farms and fields, this day,
No grey old head that drops? No darkening
eye!

Spirits of Pity, lift your hands, and pray —
Each hour, alas, men die!

V.

The love-songs of the Blackbird now are done:

Upon the o'ergrown, loose, red-berried cover

The latest of late warblers sings as one

That trolls at random when the feast is over;

From bush to bush the silver cobwebs hover,

Shrouding the dried up rill's exhausted urn;

No breeze is fluting o'er the green morass:

Nor falls the thistle-down: in deep-drenched
grass,

Now blue, now red, the shifting dew-gems
burn.

VI.

Mine ear thus torpid held, methinks mine eye

Is armed the more with visionary power:

As with a magnet's force each redd'ning bower

Compels me through the woodland pageantry:

Slowly I track the forest's skirt: emerging,

Slowly I climb from pastoral steep to steep:

I see far mists from reedy valleys surging:

I follow the procession of white sheep

That fringe with wool old stock and ruined
rath —

How staid to-day, how eager when the lambs

Went leaping round their dams!

I cross the leaf-choked stream from stone to stone,

Pass the hoar ash-tree, trace the upland path,

The furze-brake that in March all golden shone

Reflected in the shy kingfisher's bath.

VII.

No more from full-leaved woods that music swells

Which in the summer filled the satiate ear :
A fostering sweetness still from bosky dells
Murmurs ; but I can hear

A harsher sound when down, at intervals,
The dry leaf rattling falls.

Dark as those spots which herald swift disease,
The death-blot marks for death the leaf yet firm :
Beside the leaf down-trodden trails the worm :

In forest depths the haggard, whitening grass
Repines at youth departed. Half-stripped trees
Reveal, as one who says, "Thou too must pass,"

Plainlier each day their quaint anatomies.
Yon Poplar grove is troubled ! Bright and bold
Babbled his cold leaves in the July breeze

As though above our heads a runnel rolled :

His mirth is o'er : subdued by old October,
He counts his lessening wealth, and, sadly sober,
Tinkles his querulous tablets of wan gold.

VIII.

Be still, ye sighs of the expiring year !

A sword there is :—ye play but with the sheath !

Whispers there are more piercing, yet more dear
Than yours, that come to me those boughs beneath ;

And well-remembered footsteps known of old
Tread soft the mildewed mould.

O magic memory of the things that were—
Of those whose hands our childish locks caress,

Of one so angel-like in tender care,
Of one in majesty so Godlike drest—

O phantom faces painted on the air,
Of friend or sudden guest ;—

I plead in vain :
The woods revere, but cannot heal my pain.
Ye sheddings from the Yew-tree and the Pine,
If on your rich and aromatic dust

I laid my forehead, and my hands put forth
In the last beam that warms the forest floor,
No answer to my yearnings would be mine,

To me no answer through those branches hoar
Would reach in noontide trance, or moony gust !

Her secret Heaven would keep, and mother Earth

Speak from her deep heart,—"Where thou know'st not, trust !"

IX.

That pang is past. Once more my pulses keep

A tenor calm, that knows nor grief nor joy ;
Once more I move as one that died in sleep,

And treads, a Spirit, the haunts he trod, a boy,
And sees them like-unlike, and sees beyond :

Then earthly life comes back, and I despond.
Ah, life, not life ! Dim woods of crimsoned beech,

That swathe the hills in sacerdotal stoles,
Burn on, burn on ! the year ere long will reach
That day made holy to Departed Souls,

The day whereon man's heart, itself a priest,
Descending to that Empire pale wherein
Beauty and Sorrow dwell, but pure from Sin,
Holds with God's Church at once its fast and feast.

Dim woods, they, they alone your vaults should tread,

The sad and saintly Dead !

Your pathos those alone ungrieved could meet

Who fit them for the Beatific Vision :

The things that as they pass us seem to cheat,

To them would be a music-winged fruition,

A cadence sweetest in the soft subsiding :

Transience to them were dear ;—for theirs the abiding

Dear as that Pain which clears from fleshly film

The spirit's eye, matures each spirit-germ,

Frost-bound on earth, but at the appointed term

Mirror of Godhead in the immortal realm.

X.

Lo there the regal exiles !—under shades

Deeper than ours, yet in a finer air—

Climbing, successive, elders, youths, and maids,

The penitential mountain's ebon stair :

The earth-shadow clips that halo round their hair :

And as lone outcasts watch a moon that wanes,

Receding slowly o'er their native plains,

Thus watch they, wistful, something far but fair.

Serene they stand, and wait,

Self-exiled by the ever-open gate :

Awile self-exiled from the All-pitying Eyes,

Lest mortal stain should blot their Paradise.

Silent they pace, ascending high and higher

The hills of God, a hand on every heart

That willing burns, a vase of cleansing fire

Fed by God's love in souls from God apart.

Each lifted face with thirst of long desire

Is pale ; but o'er it grows a mystic sheen,

Because on them God's face, by them unseen,

Is turned, through narrowing darkness hourly nigher.

XI.

Sad thoughts, why roam ye thus in your unrest

The world unseen ? Why scorn our mortal bound ?

Is it not kindly, Earth's maternal breast ?

Is it not fair, her head with vine-wreaths crowned ?

Farm-yard and barn are heaped with golden store ;

High piled the sheaves illumine the russet plain ;

Hedges and hedge-row trees are yellowed o'er

With waifs and trophies of the labouring wain :

Why murmur, "Change is change, when downward ranging ;

Spring's upward change but pointed to the unchanging ?"

Yet, oh how just your sorrow, if ye knew

The true grief's sanction true !

'Tis not the thought of parting youth that moves us ;

'Tis not alone the pang for friends departed:—
The Autumnal grief that raises while it proves us
Wells from a holier source and deeper-hearted!
For this a sadness mingles with our mirth;—
For this a bitter mingles with the sweetness;
The throne that shakes not is the Spirit's
right;
The heart and hope of Man are infinite;
Heaven is his home, and, exiled here on earth,
Completion most betrays the incompleteness!

XII.

Heaven is his home. — But hark! the breeze in-
creases:
The sunset forests, catching sudden fire,
Flash, swell, and sing, a millioned-organed
choir:
Roofing the West, rich clouds in glittering fleeces
O'er-arch ethereal spaces and divine
Of heaven's clear hyaline.
No dream is this! Beyond that radiance golden
God's Sons I see, His armies bright and strong,
The ensanguined Martyrs here with palms high
holden,
The Virgins there, a lily-lifting throng!
The Splendours nearer draw. In choral blending
The Prophets' and the Apostles' chant I hear;
I see the City of the Just descending

With gates of pearl and diamond bastions
sheer.

The walls are agate and chalcedony:
On jacinth street and jasper parapet
The unwaning light is light of Deity,
Not beam of lessening moon or suns that set.
That undecided foresty of spires
Lets fall no leaf! those lights can never range:
Saintly fruitions and divine desires
Are blended there in rapture without change.
— Man was not made for things that leave us,
For that which goeth and returneth,
For hopes that lift us yet deceive us,
For love that wears a smile yet mourneth;
Not for fresh forests from the dead leaves spring-
ing.

The cyclic re-creation which, at best,
Yields us — betrayal still to promise clinging —
But tremulous shadows of the realm of rest:
For things immortal Man was made,
God's Image, latest from His hand,
Co-heir with Him, Who in Man's flesh arrayed
Holds o'er the worlds the Heavenly-Human
wand:

His portion this — sublime
To stand where access none hath Space or Time,
Above the starry host, the Cherub band,
To stand — to advance — and after all to stand!

From The Cornhill Magazine.

THEOLOGY IN EXTREMIS:

OR, A SOLILOQUY THAT MAY HAVE BEEN DELIV-
ERED IN INDIA, JUNE, 1867.

"The Mahometans would have spared life to any
of their English prisoners who should consent to
profess Mahometanism, by repeating the usual short
formula; but only one half-caste cared to save him-
self in that way." — *Extract from a newspaper ac-
count of one of the Indian massacres.*

MORITURUS LOQUITUR.

I.

OFF in the pleasant summer years,
Reading the tales of days bygone,
I have mused on the story of human tears,
All that man unto man has done —
Massacre, torture, and black despair —
Reading it all in my easy-chair;

II.

Passionate prayer for a minute's life;
Tortured, crying for death as rest;
Husband pleading for child or wife,
Pitiless stroke upon tender breast.
Was it all real as that I lay there
Lazily stretched on my easy-chair?

III.

Could I believe in those hard old times
Here, in this safe luxurious age?
Were the horrors invented to season rhymes,
Or truly is man so fierce in his rage?
What could I suffer, and what could I dare?
I who was bred to that easy-chair.

IV.

They were my fathers, the men of yore,
Little they recked of a cruel death;
They would dip their hands in a heretic's gore,
They stood and burnt for a rule of faith.
What would I burn for, and whom not spare?
I, who had faith in an easy-chair.

V.

Now do I see old tales are true,
Here in the clutch of a savage foe;
Now shall I know what my fathers knew;
Bodily anguish and bitter woe,
Naked and bound in the hot sun's glare,
Far from my civilized easy-chair.

VI.

Now have I tasted and understood
That old-world feeling of mortal hate;
For the Mussulmans round us keen for blood,
They will kill us — they do but wait;
While I — I would sell ten lives, at least,
For one fair stroke at that devilish priest

VII.

Just in return for the kick he gave,
Bidding me call on the prophet's name;
Even a dog by this may save
Skin from the knife, and soul from the flame;
My soul! if he can let the prophet burn it;
But life is sweet if a word may earn it.

VIII.

A bullock's death, and at thirty years!
Just one phrase, and a man gets off it.

Look at that mongrel clerk in his tears,
Whining aloud the name of the prophet;
Only a formula easy to patter,
And, God Almighty, what *can* it matter?

IX.

"Matter enough," will my comrade say,
Praying aloud here close at my side,
"Whether you mourn in despair alway,
Cursed for ever by Christ denied;
Or whether you suffer a minute's pain
All the reward of Heaven to gain."

X.

Not for a moment faltereth he,
Sure of the promise and pardon of sin;
Thus did the martyrs die, I see,
Little to lose and muckle to win;
Death means Heaven—he longs to receive it,
But what shall I do if I don't believe it?

XI.

Life is pleasant, and friends may be nigh,
Fain would I speak one word and be spared.
Yet I could be silent and cheerfully die
If I were only sure God cared;
If I had Faith, and were only certain
That light is behind that terrible curtain.

XII.

But what if he listeth nothing at all
Of words a poor wretch in his terror may say,
That mighty God who created all?
Who meant us to live the appointed day,
Who needs not either to bless or ban,
Weaving the woof of an endless plan.

XIII.

He is the Reaper, and binds the sheaf,
Shall not the season its order keep?
Can it be changed by a man's belief?
Millions of harvests still to reap.
Will God reward, if I die for a creed,
Or will He but pity, and sow more seed?

XIV.

Surely He pities who made the brain,
When breaks that mirror of memories sweet,
When the hard blow falleth, and never again
Nerve shall quiver nor pulse shall beat.
Bitter the vision of vanishing joys—
Surely He pities when man destroys.

XV.

Here stand I on the ocean's brink,
Who hath brought news of the further shore?

How shall I cross it? Sail or sink,
One thing is sure, I return no more.
Shall I find haven, or aye shall I be
Tossed in the depths of a shoreless sea?

XVI.

They tell fair tales of a far-off land,
Of love rekindled, of forms renewed;
There may I only touch one hand,
Here life's ruin will little be rued;
But the hand I have pressed and the voice I have
heard,
To lose them for ever, and all for a word!

XVII.

Now do I feel that my heart must break,
All for one glimpse of a woman's face;
Swiftly the slumbering memories wake
Odour and shadow of hour and place;
One bright ray through the darkening past
Leaps from the lamp as it brightens last,

XVIII.

Showing me sunnier in western land,
Now as the cool breeze murmureth
In leaf and flower—And here I stand
In a plain all bare save the shadow of death,
Leaving my life in its full noonday;
And no one to know why I flung it away!

XIX.

Why? Am I bidding for glory's roll?
I shall be murdered and clean forgot;
Is it a bargain to save my soul?
God, whom I trust in, bargains not.
Yet for the honour of English race,
May I not live or endure disgrace.

XX.

I must be gone to the crowd untold
Of men by the cause which they served un-
known,
Who moulder in myriad graves of old.
Never a story and never a stone
Tells of the martyrs who die like me,
Just for the pride of the old countree.

XXI.

Ay, but the word, if I could have said it,
Ay, by no terrors of hell perplexed—
Hard to be silent and get no credit
From man in this world, or reward in the
next.
None to bear witness and reckon cost
Of the name that is saved by the life that is lost.